

GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

Making sport possible



GROUNDS
MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION

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2021 PAY SCALES
GMA research
suggests 1.2% pay rise

**COMMUNITY
CRICKET**
Another dimension
to Clap for Carers

BREXIT BRITAIN
What's the deal
for pesticides?

**SPOTLIGHT ON
GROUNDS CARE**
GMA announces
#GroundsWeek

WONDER WOMAN

Camille Le Lay makes her mark
in a male-dominated world



JANUARY 2021

WELCOME

A positive outlook

I had hoped that 2021 would begin with more optimism, but additional national lockdowns have added to 2020's challenges and tribulations. Despite this, I am filled with positivity and sincerely hope that things can only get better from here.

With three UK-approved vaccines ready and available, I feel confident that we can welcome our community later this year at SALTEX and, in the meantime, we will continue connecting people online through education, webinars and wider activity. You will read in this edition that the GMA will be generating even more recognition for turf care professionals and volunteers by launching an awareness campaign titled #GroundsWeek.

I'm really excited to bring this to the fore, almost exactly a year after lockdown was announced, especially after a physically and mentally challenging year. I very much hope this initiative will help lift spirits and provide the opportunity for even more people to recognise the turf sector's contribution through our media activity. What will you do to mark #GroundsWeek?

Finally, I personally want to thank Colin Hoskins – the *Grounds Management* editor and an outstanding journalist – who retires this month. You can read a full article on his long service and contribution to the GMA on page 8. Colin has been brilliant in his role for the past 15 years with us, and his unflappable approach has endeared everyone who has had the pleasure of working with him. I also welcome Karen Maxwell as interim editor, who joins us from February issue.

So, I'm celebrating new beginnings and the confidence in a better, more accessible world this coming year – and The GMA stands to support your work along the way.

Geoff Webb

Chief Executive

Grounds Management Association



**GROUND
MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION**
Making sport possible

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February 10



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GROUND MANAGEMENT

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UPDATE

THE LATEST HEADLINES FROM THE GMA AND THE INDUSTRY



RECOGNISING GROUNDS STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Inaugural #GroundsWeek celebration announced

THE GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

Association (GMA) has announced the launch of #GroundsWeek, taking place on March 1-7 2021 to celebrate and highlight the vital role played by professional grounds staff, volunteers and the turf sector in making sport possible. Following a difficult year for the turf sector, due to the impact of Covid-19, the GMA aims to showcase grounds staff and the amazing work they do – and have continued to do – despite sport coming to a grinding halt. It also comes after a year where parks and green spaces have been invaluable to the public's health – with increased use for 'daily exercise' and physical activity.

Grounds management continues to be challenging beyond 2020 due to limited resources and budgets, coupled with more varied and unpredictable weather conditions that make planning tasks even more difficult.

Geoff Webb, CEO of the GMA, said: "We know that the skill involved is often misunderstood. We want to inspire sports fans and the general public to celebrate alongside us and get even more people to enter the profession and lend a helping hand at pitches across the country.

"Without the vital work that grounds staff do, many sports facilities would

face cancellations and potentially closure. This is a chance to recognise all the hard work that goes into making sport possible and keeping green spaces accessible."

The GMA's campaign will encourage organisations and individuals across the industry, whether they have a career in grounds management or volunteer for an hour a week, to get involved both on the pitch and on social media.

Further details about the campaign will follow in February, alongside #GroundsWeek graphics and content for wider use. This will include top tips and a social media pack for organisations wanting to get involved. Businesses can also get involved by pledging to be a #GroundsWeek partner.

Geoff continued: "Grounds staff are vital and the work they do is essential to getting the nation active – from professional athletes to local communities. After a really tough year, we're launching this celebration week to raise awareness and give our members the opportunity to get the recognition they deserve."

For more information and further updates follow the GMA on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

OBITUARIES

Kenneth Ellison

GMA LIFE MEMBER Kenneth Ellison has died. Kenneth spent his working life in the grounds industry and, until his retirement, was an active member of the Bristol Branch and South West Region.

Arthur Harrison

FORMER SISIS SALES director Arthur Harrison passed away in November last year, aged 88.

His career at SISIS spanned over 30 years, beginning in 1960 initially as assistant sales office manager, before being appointed sales director in 1979 where he worked until his retirement in 1996.

Peter 'Bob' Hesk

Bob Hesk has died, aged 87. He was a stalwart supporter of branch activity and was secretary of Thirsk Cricket Club for 10 years. He was a groundsman for several decades and an under 17s manager, as well as the chairman of Thirsk Athletic Sports & Social Club, an umpire in the top divisions of the Nidderdale & District Amateur Cricket League and Y&DCUSA president. In his later years, Bob had a stint at Thirsk Bowls Club as a playing member, and at one point took over as secretary.

David Robinson, on behalf of GMA Yorkshire branch

TECHNOLOGY

SIS hybrid pitch in Buenos Aires

THE COMPLETION OF South America's most technically advanced stadium is set to take place this month.

Irish-owned global pitch specialist, SIS Pitches, has undertaken a full reconstruction of the stadium pitch at Club Atlético River Plate, at the Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The existing pitch has been replaced by a state-of-the-art SISGrass hybrid grass system, supported with an undersoil SISAir aeration system, which has been used successfully in many stadia around the world.

NEW YEAR, NEW EDITOR

Karen Maxwell
Guest editor



The Grounds Management Association bids a fond farewell to Colin Hoskins, who is retiring after 10 years at the helm of *Grounds Management* magazine



THE GMA would like to give a big 'thank you' to the *Grounds Management* magazine editor Colin Hoskins, who decided to retire at the end of 2020 to spend more time with his grandchildren and engage with his favourite pastime – fishing.

Colin, aged 66, has been a journalist all his working life, having worked in magazine publishing, at national news titles and as a news editor at Radio Luxembourg, before moving into press relations and marketing. He has had a long, supportive relationship with the GMA – from heading up the press office at SALTEX Windsor, to supporting the organisation in a PR capacity, as Learning LIVE co-ordinator at SALTEX NEC, a host scriptwriter at the organisation's annual Industry Awards and as editor of *The Groundsman*, and latterly the *Grounds Management* magazine, when he took over from former editor Mike Beardall 10 years ago.

Everyone who met and was interviewed by Colin admired his passion for the grounds care industry, his professional attitude, his kind-hearted nature, and his dry sense of humour. He was also very modest, hiding the fact that he won the US TOCA International Communications Content for the best international article with an interview with Keith Kent at Twickenham in 2014 – until it became common industry knowledge.

Chris Biddle remembers working with Colin at SALTEX Windsor when he was editor at *Service Dealer* and *Turf Pro* magazines. "Running a busy press office at any major event requires supreme qualities of patience, tact, stamina, diplomacy and the ability to answer 15 questions at a time while keeping 'hacks' watered and fed. All qualities that Colin had in spades," he says.

As magazine editor, Colin has helped to raise the profile of GMA members and the challenges they face in grounds care – having conducted nearly 200 face-to-face interviews

with professional, grassroots, volunteer and apprentice grounds personnel within his role. GMA Chief Operating Officer, Jason Booth, has experienced some of Colin's news-gathering techniques over the years. "Our industry is built on relationships and you'll go a long way to find anybody that doesn't have a good relationship with Colin Hoskins," he says. "You can tell that he does his research before every interview and he makes an effort to talk to every member of the team to get a full story."

GMA CEO Geoff Webb says he's had the privilege of working with Colin since he joined the organisation and that he's given plenty of sound advice over the years. "Colin has witnessed, and been a part of, many changes but he's always been positive and brilliant to have at your side," Geoff says. "His knowledge and understanding of our sector knows no bounds. He's been at the forefront of promoting many ground staff and turf businesses in our sector and is definitely one of our industry's unsung heroes."

"Replacing Colin, I am also delighted to announce that Karen Maxwell will be editing the magazine in the coming months. Karen has herself a great pedigree in magazine editing, having worked closely with Colin over the years on our member magazine. She has also previously gained a great reputation for producing the *Sports Management* magazine during her time at The Leisure Media Company. So, along with welcoming back Karen, we wish everyone connected with the GMA a happy, healthy 2021." ■



Karen Maxwell will be guest editor of the magazine from February 2021 until further notice.

Have a story for Grounds Management?
Please email editor@thegma.org.uk

Colin Hoskins
Editor



1.2% PAY RISE RECOMMENDED FOR 2021

Research commissioned by the Grounds Management Association (GMA) highlights a 1.2% increase across all grounds staff pay bands for this year

FOLLOWING RESEARCH commissioned by the Grounds Management Association, conducted by Myriad Research, a recommendation of a 1.2% increase in pay for all grounds people is being made after a year when the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the UK's economic outlook is yet to be known.

The findings show that the UK is on track to record the largest decline in annual GDP for 300 years, with output falling by more than 11 per cent in 2020. Unemployment continues to rise and employers' intentions to make further redundancies remain elevated. Adding to an already complicated picture is the remaining uncertainty surrounding the terms of the UK's exit from the European Union and the economic repercussions of that agreement. Levels of inflation are not expected to align with pre-pandemic forecasts until 2024.

Unsurprisingly, this backdrop will reduce pay awards across the economy, with over half of private sector employers planning to freeze wages to September 2021 and the Government following suit for the majority of public sector jobs. The median projected pay awards for 2021 are 1% – the lowest annual figure for over a decade.

Based on extensive pay and labour market research by Myriad Research, the GMA says that while its recommended pay award of 1.2% for all grounds care bands is lower than in previous years, it is intended to balance any estimated increase in the cost of living with affordability in what is likely to be a very challenging labour market in 2021.

In addition, says the GMA, the amount paid in recognition of GMA qualifications should increase to £650 per band to ensure that training and professional development remain a priority.

The following bands reflect recommended starting basic salary payments and are based on a 37.5 hour week. Further details on roles and responsibilities can be found in the GMA's generic job descriptions, and these will be relaunched to coincide with the GMA's Pitch Grading Framework later this year.

STARTING BASIC SALARY PA		
	Average*	Band
Grounds manager	£47,308	N/A
Head groundsperson	£37,552	£31,656 - £43,447
Deputy head groundsperson / sole charge	£29,476	£25,898 - £33,054
Groundsperson (Skilled)	£27,558	£24,219 - £30,896
Groundsperson	£22,079	£19,404 - £24,753
Junior groundsperson (aged 17)	£16,498	N/A
Junior groundsperson (aged 16)	£13,701	N/A

*NB: The report reflects current starting salaries, not an upper threshold or maximum for each role.

It is also recommended to consider variable factors that may increase a person's minimum starting salary, which could include:

- The number of sports being played
- The level and type of sport
- Intensity of use
- Size of facilities and organisations
- Total acreage managed
- Job holder's problem solving and decision making capability
- Staffing levels
- Budgetary responsibilities
- Qualifications required.

Bonuses, overtime and subsistence payments have not been included, nor has the benefit value of any accommodation provided. Regional pay variations have been taken into account; higher cost areas of the country would expect to make salary awards at the upper levels of the appropriate band. Regional differentials are: London Inner £3,988; London Outer £2,382; and Fringe Areas £712 - £1,430. Other UK regions are broadly similar in their pay levels. The recommended minimum pay rate for a groundsperson in London should be set at £21,000 (outer) and £22,500 (inner). ■



GMA members can access the full report via the [member portal](#)

All photos courtesy of Le Mans Stadium

WONDER WOMAN!

Karen Maxwell
Guest Editor



Camille Le Lay, a self-proclaimed “motivated and ambitious” young grounds woman, is on a mission to pave the way for other women to progress within the sports turf industry

IT'S FAIR TO SAY that female grounds personnel are a rarity within the sports turf grounds management sector. In fact, according to research findings in the GMA's 2019 industry-wide survey 'Groundsmanship – Sport's Vital Profession', women represent just 2% of the 26,000 employed and 37,000 volunteer combined workforce.

By all accounts, this trend is reflected at sport facilities in France, too. But Camille Le Lay – a self-proclaimed “motivated” and “ambitious” young grounds woman, who has been working for iTurf Management at Stade de France and Le Mans stadia for the past three years – hopes to increase the female workforce equality ratio, by encouraging more women into the profession through her own career progression.

“Groundsmanship is a career that is rarely chosen by French women,” Camille explains. This, she says, may be due to the perceived physical demands within a male-dominated working environment. “There is no denying that working with some of the heavy machines can be physically demanding for a woman, but it's about having a positive mentality and an open-minded approach – and I believe that any woman with that mindset, and a willingness to learn, can flourish in this job.”

Camille, who says her passion for turf maintenance was passed on to her by her father's love of gardening, plus her love of sport, gained a baccalaureate in landscape gardening before completing a BTS in landscape design at Kerplouz-LaSalle College

iTurf Management

iTurf Management provides a local management role at Stade de France, Bordeaux and Le Mans stadia, where the company employs a practical grounds team to manage the turf facilities. The consultancy arm has a wider remit, providing consultancy across the world as well as project management and tournament delivery.

The company's portfolio also extends to the design and project management of new installations and pitch upgrades.

iturf-mgt.com

in Brittany, France. She then enrolled on a bachelor's degree, specialising in sport turf management at Tecomah college which is located on the outskirts of Paris. “This training gave me an insight into the different playing surfaces and how to construct them,” Camille explains. “Understanding what is under the grass is important so you can consistently adapt maintenance techniques to deliver the best possible surface.”

Career progression

Camille joined iTurf Management straight from Tecomah, and iTurf's chief technical officer Andy Cole says the company was excited to have her join. “Camille came to us as an apprentice student and really stood out from the other apprentices at the time. She was eager to learn all the technical aspects of the work, the science, as well as the practicalities of doing the job. The acid test is always ‘when can we let them loose on the Dennis mower?’, and she rose to the challenge very quickly,” he says.

According to Andy, Camille carries out all the tasks expected of a grounds person to deliver pitches to International and League standard. “She is always keen to learn, and also to discuss and share knowledge with her colleagues,” Andy explains.

All team members have a role in the business with Olivier Emond leading the team at Stade de France (he also supervises the teams at Le Mans and Bordeaux stadia). Dimitri Vovard leads the team at Le Mans and Camille is able to discuss turf management →

“ **WOMEN REPRESENT JUST 2% OF THE 26,000 EMPLOYED AND 37,000 VOLUNTEER COMBINED WORKFORCE** ”



Camille is hoping to encourage more women to pursue a career in grounds management



WHAT'S THE DEAL FOR PESTICIDES?

We look at two key aspects of change that will be affected by Brexit; regulations for use of plant protection products and the issue of the revised UK National Action Plan related to weed, pest and disease management

John Moverley OBE
Amenity Forum chair



ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES

established independent pesticides regulatory rules on January 1 2021 and for those producing or placing pesticides on the market, they must ensure they are authorised under the new rules from that date. Some of the responsibilities are devolved and negotiations are ongoing to ensure an overall UK framework which will hopefully be achieved. Under the terms of the Northern Ireland Protocol, the EU pesticides rules will continue to apply



Take part in the survey

The Government is funding a major survey of the amenity sector to increase its understanding of the total amount of plant protection products used, their modes of application and the key reasons for use. It is vitally important that the sector fully supports this work as it will form the basis for future policy and strategic decisions, and it will provide very valuable information for use across the sector.

The Amenity Forum has been consulted to help ensure the survey is as straightforward as possible and relatively easy to complete. This way it is hoped that participation will be high, and that good and sound data can result.

The survey will be sent out electronically from the week commencing January 18 and if you are selected to receive one, please complete and return it promptly. It is understood that there are many calls on time, but this survey could prove really important to all.

testing, for example, and the bulk of its requirements have been in the form of targets. It has looked to the Amenity Forum to work across the sector to voluntarily achieve them. The indications are for similar going forward, but there will be a likely increase in legal requirements and enforcement as well as greater pressures to achieve targets set. A short video clip summarising the main drivers for the new Action Plan can be found on the Amenity Forum YouTube site: [youtube.com/channel/UCv-i2KjRJ5OAloS2WCOonQw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv-i2KjRJ5OAloS2WCOonQw)

Amenity Standard

The introduction of the Amenity Standard has been welcomed by all sides and there is much support for this to become a requirement in future. The standard demonstrates to the public and all concerned that the standard of work undertaken to maintain amenity and sports surfaces is at a professional level and meets all legal and other requirements. For an organisation to show the standard, it must be a member of an approved assurance scheme. During the last months, BASIS Registration has been working, with the support of the GMA, to produce a specific sports surface assurance scheme due to be announced early in 2021. For all who operate to professional standards, meeting the requirement should be relatively straightforward. In the coming years, holding and displaying the standard will be important and so all GMA members are asked to fully engage in this development. ■

in Northern Ireland after January 1 2021.

Legislation to ensure the safe use of plant protection products will be similar to existing regulations across the UK, certainly from the start, and indeed guidance on best practice and priorities will also remain the same. Further information on current guidance is available from the Amenity Forum website (www.amenityforum.co.uk). Having said that, the UK is reviewing its National Action Plan which may lead to some significant changes. Current product authorisations will still be valid in Great Britain from January 1 2021 although responsibilities will transfer from current European bodies to UK ones. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) operating largely through its Chemical Regulations Department will continue to act as the UK's regulator.

So, the message is that there's no dramatic change. It is steady as we go, but undoubtedly change will apply and the Amenity Forum will continue to work with all involved to ensure effective communication of

these changes and to ensure amenity interests are well expressed.

The UK National Action Plan

To add to the change agenda, the UK has been undertaking a full review of its National Action Plan. It is being consulted upon with a view to its finalisation and issue in 2021. The plan sets the legislations and targets for all involved in weed, pest and disease management. The current plan has been light on legal requirements, including operator training and equipment

Stay up to date

During February and March 2021, the Amenity Forum will be running a series of free events on this topic. These will be held online with the programme starting at 10.15am and concluding by 12.30pm. There will be opportunity for questions and all the current issues will be covered. The events will be held on February 9 (England), 11 (Wales), 23 (England) and 25 (Northern Ireland), and March 4 (Scotland).

The content of all events will be broadly the same, but each will have a particular national focus. Pre-registration is required at admin@amenityforum.net

PRODUCT SHOWCASE

STIHL

BGA 200 cordless blower

The new STIHL BGA 200 cordless blower cleans large areas quickly and efficiently.

With a blowing force of 21 Newton, STIHL's new BGA 200 cordless blower is the most powerful in the STIHL range and features a high air speed for coping with wet leaves.

The BGA 200 is exceptionally easy to handle, thanks to its newly developed comfort carrying system. This innovative feature allows the tool to be used in different ways depending on the application; hand-held in confined working areas or suspended in the carrying system for larger-scale cleaning work. This approach



is practical, efficient and increases operational comfort.

Thanks to its low-noise operation, the BGA 200 can also be operated without restriction in noise-sensitive areas and can be used without hearing protection. The blowing force has three different settings, which can easily be selected by the user via a selector switch. Furthermore, the user can easily adjust the length of the nozzle to meet different requirements and operating situations with the help of a quick adjustment system.

stihl.co.uk

EGO

Power+ ST1510E linetrimmer

In 2019, cordless outdoor garden equipment specialist, EGO, launched its revolutionary tool and world's first linetrimmer with Powerload technology.

The outdoor power tool is the first ever linetrimmer tool with a fully automatic line re-loading system. As such, it has received worldwide recognition and has won many global awards for innovation.

The intuitive design and Powerload technology provides ground maintenance professionals with a simple, fast and clean solution for replacing lines. In less than 10 seconds, users can insert the trimmer line through the head of the tool, press activate, and the automatic re-loading system perfectly winds the line onto the spool.

Powered with EGO's 56-volt Arc lithium battery, the Power+ ST1510E linetrimmer surpasses the performance of petrol-powered outdoor power tools, without the vibration, fuss or fumes.



egopowerplus.co.uk

MAKITA

Cordless linetrimmer

During 2020, as access to work sites became more limited, those in the trade were increasingly required to complete the same amount of work in less time than before. In turn, a new collection of powerful landscaping tools started to come to the fore, with Makita's DUR369LPG2 cordless (36v) linetrimmer being one of the standout solutions.

Powered by two LXT 18V lithium-ion batteries and brushless motor system, this 1kw machine has been helping the nation's grounds care contractors to complete maintenance tasks in an efficient and safe manner, and thanks to its cordless design, users no longer have to transport fuel and so health and safety risks are reduced. Low vibration and zero emissions also greatly benefit the operator and the environment.

From tapering, scything and screeding, the company's DUR369LPG2 cordless linetrimmer is proving a big hit with those using it, emerging as the perfect antidote to the demands of the current business environment. The product, which comes complete with batteries, as well as a twin port charger, harness, metal two-tooth blade, plastic blade, nylon cutting head, blade guard, box wrench, hex wrench and accessory bag is available to buy online and in-store.



makitauk.com

Eric O'Donnell
Managing director,
Sports Labs



IS COVID-19 A REAL THREAT ON ARTIFICIAL PITCHES?

There are concerns about the use of disinfectants to deal with potential pathogens on artificial pitches. Recognising how this is also an operational issue, one company investigated the situation

THERE IS NO research or Government guidance (as far as I am aware) relating explicitly to Covid-19 surviving on synthetic turf surfaces, nor any published research into treating surfaces to mitigate the risk, or any published study concerning the likelihood of an infected athlete transferring the virus to another player via the playing surface. So, it was appropriate for some research to be done on the disinfectants used to neutralise the pathogens which might be left on surfaces by users. The concern is that players might come into contact with pathogens when they interact with playing surfaces.

Sports Labs first assessed the potential existence of pathogens on typical 3G playing surfaces, then evaluated the effectiveness of disinfectants. This work was conducted in the field on 'live' 3G pitches, and were assessed as typical. Tests were conducted by taking swab samples from the surfaces using an in-house protocol. These swabs were then evaluated for the presence of bacteria and/or viruses.

Using Sports Labs' protocol, a result that needs intervention would be a measure above 500 RLU. Therefore, when we tested a surface, we measured each location against this standard. The highest readings from up to six different locations on all of the five sites were 304 RLU

(on Field 1 – contamination by moss on surface and weeds in boundary, generally in poor condition), 96 RLU (Field 2 – well-maintained surface, recently maintained by brushing), 175 RLU (Field 3 – general school use, well maintained), 6 RLU (Field 4 – an indoor pitch with a new surface; very low values at every location; site used infrequently since lockdown) and 11 RLU (Field 5 – well-maintained surface, recently brushed). The results highlighted positive results, showing a low level of contamination found and low potential for bacteria or viruses to be present on the surface.

While this is not a definitive study and more work would be required, it indicates what might be found. And while these results do not highlight a particular issue with 3G pitches as regards pathogens (bacteria and or viruses), I would still recommend a precautionary approach.

Disinfecting a surface with an appropriate proprietary product has been found to neutralise pathogens on the surface and reduce the potential for infections. There are many products on the market that are used to disinfect artificial playing surfaces. If you are considering purchasing such products, I would recommend that you obtain a technical data sheet to determine if it has any potential harmful effects on users or the environment, and check that the artificial playing surface



Testing for the existence of potential pathogens on a playing surface

manufacturer approves of using the product on the system you have. You must be confident that it has no detrimental effect on the surface or impact on the warranty. The one big takeaway is the need to clean and treat surfaces regularly to help stop the spread of infection and diseases. We recommend considering this as part of any ongoing maintenance programme.

For more information visit sportslabs.com

SALTEX

SPORTS AMENITIES LANDSCAPING TRADE EXHIBITION



POWERED
BY
INNOVATION



3 - 4 NOVEMBER
2021

THE NEC
BIRMINGHAM

FREE
ENTRY



EUROPE'S LARGEST ANNUAL EVENT FOR GROUNDS CARE PROFESSIONALS

Discover the latest product innovations • **Connect** with industry suppliers
Network with grounds care professionals • **Receive** 1-2-1 advice on specific turf challenges
Update your knowledge on the latest trends • **Progress** your career with expert guidance
The Eco Village featuring the latest environmentally-friendly products in grounds care

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