



Annual Report 2019

Member Associations:

Austria, Belgium, BIGGA, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Rep. of Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland.

Affiliate Member Associations:

South Africa, GCSAA

Patrons:

Aquatrols, Barenbrug, Belrobotics, Campey Turf Care, Capillary Concrete, Clubcar, Culterra, Dennis-Sisis, EIGCA, EGCOA, Foley United, Frank Newberry, Goldcrop Ltd, Grundfos, GTC, Harradine Golf, Herbatech, Hunter, Indigrow, John Deere, John Moore, Kainuu College, Le Golf National, Melspring International, Ransomes-Jacobsen, RE (GOLF), Steiner & Partner, SIS Grass, STMC, Sustane, Symbio, Syngenta, Toro, Verschoor

Overview:

During 2019 FEGGA worked in the following key areas.

- Provided support to all our Member Associations.
- The “Responsible Golf Course Management” document is now translated into 10 languages and serves the needs of 15 Associations. The FEGGA Board uses the central pillars of the document in meeting the needs of greenkeeping and the game of golf.
- Through its strong developing partnership with the R&A, FEGGA is engaging in the next steps of GolfCourse 2030 for Europe.
- Worked with the R&A in developing a Pioneering research initiative, and in October hosted a Workshop in Amsterdam to look at Research across Europe.
- Continued to engage in a STERF research project through the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) “SUSPHOS” Sustainable phosphorus (P) fertilization on golf courses (2017-20)
- Attended and presented at many National Member Association events, which has made the work of FEGGA clearer and more visible to many greenkeepers, underlining the many benefits of FEGGA to the European greenkeeping industry.
- Produced articles for publication by Member Associations in their own magazines which have helped greenkeeper members learn more of FEGGA work in their own languages.

FEGGA Conference 2019:

22 Associations made the trip to Rome to engage in what was a very inspiring Conference which focused on further development through Association stories of challenges and engagement.

The venue for the first day was the 2022 Ryder Cup venue, The Marco Simone Golf and Country Club. We were welcomed by the staff led by Riccardo Tirotti, Golf and Business Manager. On a day of clear skies and sunshine, the terrace was the perfect place to view the first stage of construction, which was preceded by an interesting introduction presented by Riccardo and Dave Sampson, the leading Architect of the 2022 Ryder Cup Golf Course.

The first day was to focus on challenges around the globe and included a Session on Pioneering European Turf Grass Research to Enhance Responsible Golf Course Management. This was part of the build up to an afternoon Session on GolfCourse 2030, the R&A initiative which focusses on the challenges facing the golf industry during the next decade and more. The speakers did a great job in preparing our members and patrons for the group work that afternoon, which provided results that will go a long way towards producing a roadmap for the next stages of Golf Course 2030 for Europe.

Day two took on a very different journey, focusing on modern technology, FEGGA Education Experiences, along with some very inspiring Association Presentations. These really went in tandem with the mission of FEGGA in sharing to benefit all. In particular, Damian McLaverty did a fantastic job in sharing the recent journey of GCSAI. Many people made comments reflecting on aspects of Damian’s presentation, and how it will help their own association in dealing and managing through their own current challenges.

This second day concluded that despite the current challenges, there is much to be positive about. We have great people working within our industry and a strong and well-educated next generation emerging; and we know that collectively we have some great tools to work with in managing our associations and delivering great opportunities to our respective memberships.

FEGGA Chairman, Paul Worster commented “Italy was a great venue for this event. The weather was kind and the delegates received a very warm welcome from the Italian Golf Federation and Greenkeepers Association, which was mirrored by the Marco Simone Golf Club, and in particular Ricardo Tirotti, Business Development Manager.” In opening the Conference, Paul said “it doesn’t matter if you are here representing ten thousand greenkeepers, or just ten greenkeepers; your voice will be heard, and you are encouraged to take a full part”.

The formal proceedings of our AGM saw the election of Koert Donkers, of the Netherlands onto the board of FEGGA. Koert, a past FEGGA Scholarship Student of Gleneagles has been a long-time supporter of FEGGA, and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our existing board.

FEGGA thanks all Patron Members and Partners; their contribution to the Conference was outstanding and the engagement they showed during the Golf Course 2030 group work enabled FEGGA to have a really balanced discussion, enabling good messages to come out of this important group work. It's essential that the Patrons engage in Golf Course 2030 as they are vital to its future success; and have already shown this through their engagement in the pilot project that has focused on United Kingdom and Rep of Ireland this past twelve months.

Finally, I want to thank our Conference Sponsors, their support is considerable in us bringing together all these organisations. A very big thank you to John Deere, The R&A, and Toro.

Looking ahead to 2020, FEGGA will be bringing its Conference to the Republic of Ireland, and jointly host the International Summit alongside the GCSAI. We all are very excited by the prospect of our visit and what we can build on during 2019 to ensure we continue to the work of supporting our industry and the game of golf.

FEGGA Conference 2021: – FEGGA is working with the GVD (German Greenkeepers Association) to bring this event to the Wiesbaden area. Dates have now been confirmed for 23-26 February 2021.

European Tour Support Teams:

FEGGA is working with the European Tour to produce a central portal for greenkeepers of FEGGA Association Members who wish to volunteer for events for Professional Development and other reasons. The portal will give greenkeepers the opportunity to choose events, make contact and sign up to them. FEGGA will build CPD and other career-enhancing opportunities into the experience. Any thoughts are welcomed by the Board.

Pioneering Research:

FEGGA and the R&A recently hosted a Workshop in Amsterdam to look at Research across Europe; the Workshop looked specifically at how Research could be improved and regionalised to make real-life and usable results readily available to greenkeepers and golf clubs. It is proposed to work towards producing two centres of Research for Central, and Southern Countries. Any thoughts welcomed by the Board; and your Board is particularly keen to receive feedback from those countries who feel their members will benefit from this.

GolfCourse 2030:

In tandem with the above, and with the FEGGA Statement of Responsible Golf Course Management in mind, FEGGA continues to work with the R&A to design and produce relevant systems and processes to meet the challenges of today in all corners of the Continent. Your input is again very welcome, and we look forward to working with you all during the Conference in Galway.

Women in Golf:

FEGGA have over the years always been supportive of Lady Greenkeepers working in our industry and were one of the first organisations to sign up to the R&A Women in Golf Charter. FEGGA are now intent on staging a European Conference aimed at Lady Greenkeepers. It should be noted that the Board strongly feel that while this event is aimed at females, it will not exclude males. Feedback is welcomed.

GEO:

FEGGA has again worked closely with GEO during 2019. We have provided platforms at many of our events for GEO during the year, which in turn has increased the awareness of the work they engage in, particularly the benefits of the OnCourse programme.

It been very good to see individual Countries translating the OnCourse programme into their own native language. The benefits seen from doing this are already very noticeable.

FEGGA through support from the R&A engaged in assisting Portugal in growing OnCourse following the launch of the newly translated edition. FEGGA ran four Workshops covering the whole Country and connected with half the golf courses in Portugal.

The Workshops covered an introduction of the concept of OnCourse, we took all the respective attendees through the sign-up process, and the many tools that make up what is now a very good resource for golf clubs to use.

The Workshops were very well received and gave FEGGA a further opportunity to engage with greenkeepers and share its approach to Responsible Golf Course management.

Board meetings:

During 2019, the board held one face to face meeting and came together on a monthly basis via Conference Calls, and regular email discussions. The board took on more individual roles during the year and feel that this has reflected well with FEGGA's ongoing work.

Electronic Newsletter:

The Newsletter has become a regular feature and continues to receive positive feedback. Its reach continues to grow, and more associations feed it onto their own memberships, and/or share within their own National Golf Industry.

I would like to remind all associations to send me their association news, Conference dates, and any educational articles that you feel our subscribers would like to read, and please share the newsletter as widely as possible.

Patron Membership:

FEGGA is pleased to welcome several new Patrons and Partners to our Organisation and wish to take this opportunity to thank **ALL** those who support European Greenkeeping so loyally. So, a big welcome to SIS Grass, Belrobotics, Symbio, Grundfos and Goldcrop Ltd. As a new feature, we will be introducing a special Patrons networking opportunity at the forthcoming FEGGA Conference in Galway.

Don Harradine Turf Experience Academy - Formerly the Don Harradine Memorial Trophy:

The FEGGA Board is working with existing and new FEGGA and Harradine Partners to launch a new event. This will be a week-long, hands on training experience for greenkeepers from FEGGA Countries featuring real-time education delivered in part by our Patrons and Partners. The project is nearly ready for launch. Feedback is welcomed.

FEGGA Association Support:

Despite very difficult financial challenges, FEGGA continues to support Associations by promoting, attending and speaking wherever possible at their events. In recent weeks FEGGA have presented at the Belgium, Bulgarian and Danish Greenkeeper Association Conferences. FEGGA remains ready to offer support to any Association which requires it – please do get in touch with any needs whatsoever and FEGGA will respond.

In closing, FEGGA notes the gesture made by the APG at their Annual Conference in offering places to members of other Associations on the same standing as their own members – e.g. at the same rates and all the same benefits. This was felt to be very successful, and FEGGA encourages all Associations to consider following this initiative.

Finally – don't forget Google-Translate when passing this memo on to your members. The FEGGA Board feel strongly that FEGGA should be all-inclusive and give the maximum opportunity to all European Greenkeeper Association members to give feedback and gain benefit from FEGGA work.

Financial Update:

As predicted 2019 was a challenging year for FEGGA but as outlined above we were still able to provide good levels of support for our Member Associations.

It was hoped that several projects in the development stage would be completed during 2019 and provide new income opportunities. For various reasons this did not happen, which did reflect a drop in projected income against our budget. We are very hopeful that these projects will move ahead during 2020.

- Membership fees represent a low percentage of annual income and the FEGGA Board recognises that future membership growth will be restricted to smaller and developing golf countries which will not vastly increase revenue. The FEGGA Board do not consider it appropriate to increase Membership or Patron fees more than the agreed rate of inflation, therefore the focus on income will remain in other areas to enable us to continue with the services we offer and want to expand on.
- The FEGGA Board hugely appreciates the contribution of all its Patrons and works to ensure value for them. The number of Patrons is currently at a level which is commensurate with FEGGA resources in terms of regular communication and engagement.
- The FEGGA Board recognises that other forms of income and sponsorship need to be developed to ensure sustainability within the Federation. The challenge is to source more core funding which would give greater stability to its level of income on a year to year basis.

You will find a financial set of accounts attached with this report.

As ever, we work hard at controlling our costs; and even more so during 2019 have been careful to maximise on the events we have supported and attended.

Finally, the Board would like to acknowledge the support of all Associations, Patron Members and Industry Partners during the last year and look forward to working with them during the next twelve months.

Dean Cleaver

Executive Officer - On behalf of the FEGGA Board