



Press release

14 May 2026

BIGGA launches Friends of First Green to support future greenkeeping workforce

The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA) is inviting businesses across the turf and golf industries to support the future of the profession by becoming [Friends of First Green](#).

Friends of First Green is a donation-led initiative designed to help BIGGA continue to grow First Green, the environmental science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education outreach programme that turns golf courses into outdoor classrooms.

Licensed by BIGGA with the kind permission of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and its Foundation, First Green enables greenkeeping teams to host guided field trips for schools, giving young people hands-on learning experiences linked to soil science, ecology, water quality, machinery, problem-solving and the wider role of golf clubs within their communities.

The initiative is delivered free of charge to schools, helping ensure young people from a wide range of backgrounds can discover the skills, science and career opportunities involved in greenkeeping.

BIGGA is now inviting businesses to become Friends of First Green through an annual donation, with a suggested contribution of £500. Support from Friends will help BIGGA reach more schools, provide educational materials and resources, fund school transport bursaries, support clubs and volunteers delivering First Green events and expand outreach at careers and training events.

The first business to join the scheme is Siems Turfgrass Ltd, led by Ken Siems, whose support marks an important step in the growth of the initiative.

Jenny Bledge, BIGGA Workforce Project Manager, said: "Initiatives like First Green are so important for the future of our industry. If we want to continue attracting the next generation into greenkeeping and golf course management, we need to give young people the opportunity

to see the wide range of skills, technology and career pathways our industry offers. Reaching both primary and secondary school pupils helps us spark that interest early and continue building it as they grow.

"Support through Friends of First Green will play a huge role in helping us make these opportunities accessible to as many young people as possible, regardless of background. Donations and support will help us continue developing resources, supporting hosting facilities and removing barriers that may prevent schools and young people from taking part.

"We are incredibly grateful to Ken Siems and Siems Turfgrass Ltd for becoming our first Friend of First Green and supporting the future of the profession in such a positive and meaningful way."

Friends of First Green will be recognised equally through a listing on the Friends of First Green webpage, a digital 'I'm a Friend of First Green' badge and inclusion in BIGGA's annual acknowledgement list.

Businesses interested in becoming a Friend of First Green can contact firstgreen@bigga.co.uk or visit the [Friends of First Green page](#) on the BIGGA website.

Notes to editors

About [BIGGA](#): The British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association is Europe's largest membership organisation for golf greenkeepers. Today BIGGA has over 6,000 greenkeepers and turf professionals as members.

BIGGA is dedicated to the continuing professional development of its members, and in serving their needs will strive through education and training for standards of excellence in golf course management throughout the greenkeeping profession.

BIGGA hosts the [BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition](#) and associated [Continue to Learn](#) education programme each January.

High-resolution images: High-resolution images of golf courses, greenkeeping activities and BIGGA events are available upon request.

Interview opportunities: BIGGA is pleased to offer interview opportunities with association representatives and, on occasion, expert greenkeepers. If you require quotes, insights or in-depth discussions, please contact our media team to schedule an interview.

For more about BIGGA, you can visit our [website](#) and follow us on [X](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

BIGGA also publishes Greenkeeper International, which can be viewed [online](#) here.