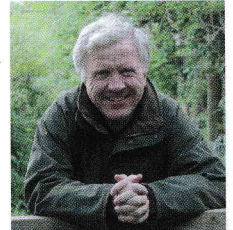


Amenity Forum debates

Two key events are being hosted by the Amenity Forum as part of next month's SALTEX LEARNING LIVE education programme



By: Professor John Moverley

There is no shortage of issues and challenges for everyone involved in weed, pest and disease control, and the need to keep up to date and stand together has never been greater. At this year's SALTEX, the Amenity Forum will address some of these key topics and provide the opportunity for debate and discussion.

Question Time

On the afternoon of November 4 (at 13.35 in the Parks, Play & People seminar theatre), a Question Time session based on the format of the popular TV programme will effectively see myself as 'David Dimbleby'. The panel will have no prior knowledge of the questions to be asked and there will be the opportunity for audience participation. The panel

members will be: Will Kay, who heads up contracting business, Languard; David Layland, joint managing director of Japanese Knotweed Control; Ruth Mann, who manages the research department at the STRI; and Chris Gray, head of learning at IOG.

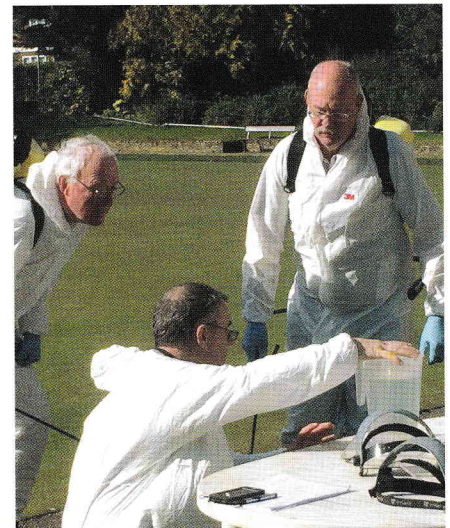
Is there a future for pesticides?

On November 5 (at 11.45 in Parks, Play & People seminar theatre), another event promises even more of a lively debate. While adoption of an integrated approach to weed, pest and disease control makes complete sense and is best practice, it must be linked to the choice of control most appropriate to specific situations. Pesticides are certainly a vital component of the mix – indeed, they often provide the most effective control, both in terms of cost and effectiveness. The number of actives available for amenity use is lower than in other sectors and there are those who would seek to further reduce these. But, without pesticides, how are we going to keep our clean and safe amenity areas, and maintain top-class sports surfaces?

We will address this issue and seek a way forward. I will initially introduce matters, setting out some of the key issues, then there will be the main presentation from Headland Amenity's Mark De Ath, followed by open questions and debate.

Some current challenges

These are very important times for those involved in pest, weed and disease control in amenity situations, whether it be pesticide use, alternative approaches or the spread of invasive weeds. The sector also needs to deal with the implementation



Accurate calibration is essential

of the Sustainable Use Directive (set out in the National Action Plan) and the Water Framework Directive.

Key in any future planning is the adoption of an integrated approach to control. This involves a move away from any blanket approach to assessment of the best control techniques for specific areas and specific times. It is important to ensure properly constructed integrated management plans are in place, demonstrating why specific approaches have been taken, whether it involves pesticide or non-pesticide techniques or, more likely, combinations of both. The Amenity Forum will launch templates and guidance to help users in producing such plans at its annual conference on October 15.

Professor John Moverley is independent chairman of the Amenity Forum, the voice of the sector in all matters concerning weed, pest and disease control. ●



Correct PPE for responsible spraying