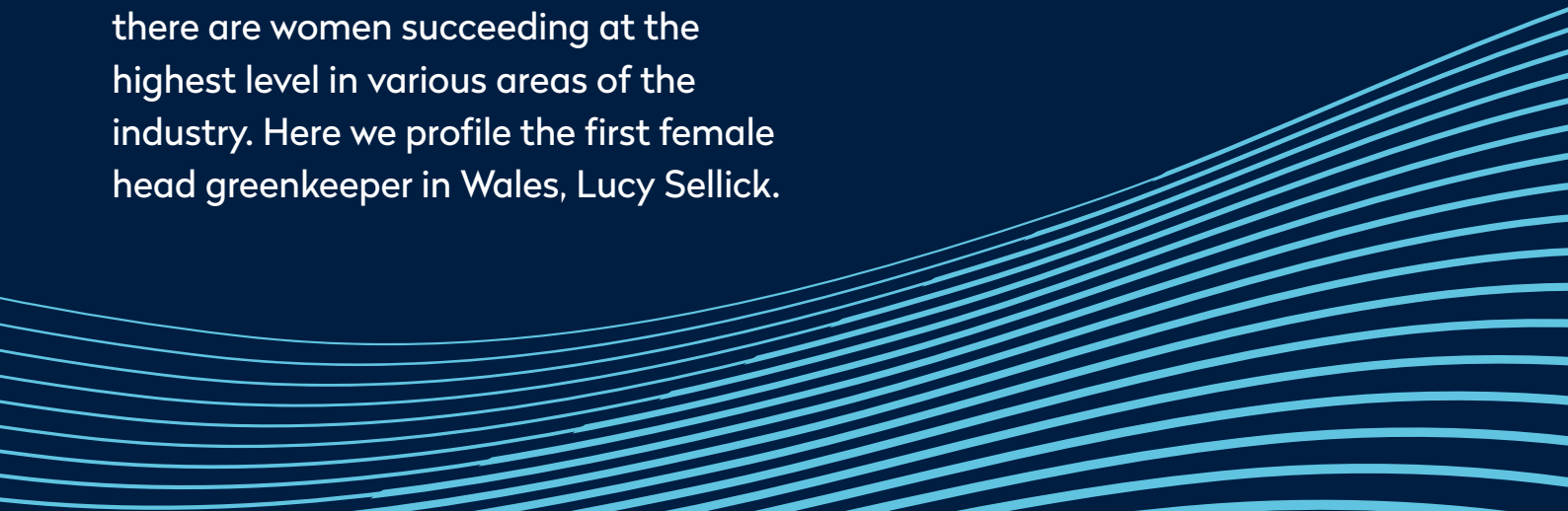




Women and Golf
Case Study

Wales's Queen of the Green.

In an often male-dominated golf world, there are women succeeding at the highest level in various areas of the industry. Here we profile the first female head greenkeeper in Wales, Lucy Sellick.

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The Background.

Greenkeeping is traditionally seen as a male-dominated industry, one not necessarily for women to follow as a career path. However, Lucy Sellick has bucked the trend.

While there are female golf club managers and golf professionals in Wales, Lucy is the first head greenkeeper – a position she is hugely proud of.

Lucy, 43, took charge at Wenvoe Castle Golf Club near Cardiff in the spring of 2018.

“I am very proud,” she said. “It has maybe taken a bit longer than I expected to get to this position, but Wenvoe Castle have given me a chance and that’s great.”

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The Journey.

Lucy came up through the ranks at Virginia Park in Caerphilly, then Celtic Manor, where she worked helping build the 2010 Ryder Cup course, then Saltford in the West Country as deputy greenkeeper, before moving back to Wales.

Along the way she has added the relevant qualifications from conservation and the environment through to chain saw and tree felling. She was the Chair of the South West Section Board of BIGGA (the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association) before transferring to the South Wales Section after the change in job.

“I got into greenkeeping by accident really,” she explained. “My neighbour was building a golf course at Virginia Park and asked if I wanted to earn some money laying turf on the driving range.”

“I earned some money before school picking up balls on the driving range and also played there as a member.”

“I loved the outdoors, so after that I moved to Celtic Manor and helped build the Ryder Cup course before moving two years before that event to go to Saltford.”

The Challenge.

The lower numbers of women in golf perhaps explains why there are no other female head greenkeepers in Wales.

Lucy is asked the question about women in greenkeeping 'a lot' but it has not deterred her enthusiasm and desire to succeed.

"I feel so many girls are missing out on a great profession, which is why I work with BIGGA to help encourage people into the industry," she continues. "There may be some negative views about women in the industry, but I have always had a warm welcome from members."

A Typical Day.

The job is so wide ranging – horticulture, agronomy, sports turf, business management, IT, conservation management all included. "We even got some members to learn dry stone walling to help with that in the winter," says Lucy.

"Greenkeeping is not just about grass cutting; for example I got my qualifications in environmental maintenance because I knew that would be the way forward. It is a great industry to be in – the views from our office window are amazing!"

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Greenkeeping Background.

A golf greenkeeper is a skilled professional whose job is to maintain a good quality playing surface and ensure the course offers a consistent challenge and an enjoyable experience for golfers. The greenkeeping team is responsible for the maintenance, care and overall appearance of a course in line with employer requirements.

Without greenkeepers, there would be no golf. From the pioneering 'Keepers of the Green' that tended the historic links at St Andrews, Prestwick and Musselburgh to today's highly-skilled and dynamic course managers across the globe, greenkeepers have shaped and defined our wonderful sport.

Background: BIGGA

BIGGA, the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association was officially formed on January 1, 1987.

The association represents the interests of greenkeepers by providing education opportunities, support and advice whilst at the same time progressing and developing the profession of greenkeeping as a whole.

6,000 turf professionals from the United Kingdom and further afield are proud to call themselves BIGGA members.

For more information on BIGGA visit www.bigga.org.uk

