

# Turfcare up close and personal

Final preparations are being made for the second Turf Business Summit in the all embracing Algarve this autumn.



It's very much the event to see and be seen in for professionals across the industry on October 8th-10th. Why? Think of five star accommodation at one of Portugal's top hotels. Imagine one of Europe's top golfing destinations playing host in the form of the charismatic Quinta do Lago complex. Look forward to lots of exciting networking, new friendships forged and old ones further strengthened.

Envisage being close to nature, the sea and the finest beaches. Enjoy excellent food and a wonderfully warm social atmosphere. In short, it's a heavenly two-day package with the best interests of hard-working professionals at the fore-front.

Mind you, prestigious venues are what Turf Business do – from Real Madrid's glamorous training facilities to Manchester City's Etihad stadium and England's spectacular St George's Park. The first Turf Business Summit deemed a huge success, ended in a flourish with a memorable tour of Real Madrid's iconic Bernabeu Stadium. It's all part of engaging turf and associated professionals, offering up the opportunity to discuss the challenges they face and help construct solid

solutions together with key decision makers.

In fact, on the serious side there are a number of challenges and problems staff right across the industry face on a daily basis. So how does this type of summit unearth the topics our passionate professionals really care about?

Christopher Horne and Mike Isaac are the men charged with driving research integral to bringing trending topics to light. Together they form Research Engine, a leading market research agency based in London. Their collaboration with Turf Business is aimed at constructing an agenda specifically for the Summit. So how does the process work? Christopher explained: "In the first instance I'll sit down with Martin and his colleagues and we'll make a list of what we think the major issues may be. Then we begin to put together a 'State Of The Nation Survey', featuring all sorts of key questions for staff to answer. The process takes in more than 200 people, so it's a good percentage – I have to say the feedback we get is excellent.

"The recorded information is then honed down to reveal hot areas of

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concern – broken into several topics it's then presented to delegates at the summit in the form of small working groups. A discussion takes place between them and they come up with clear views and possible solutions to the challenge in question. People who may have brought up a particular topic earlier may find themselves looking at a totally different problem in another group – so it works really well."

Christopher will also bring into play various twitter surveys and bits of other related material to help inspire the delegates further. It's a simple yet carefully thought out scheme, bringing

positive results and participation to the table.

He added: "The biggest issues at last year's Summit centred around both bringing in and keeping young people in the industry, and the grass roots workings of the business. As professionals readily admit, not everyone works at a top sporting club or venue. At grass roots, budgets can be a huge problem to staff.

Christopher also reminded me of some of the modern pressures placed on professionals explaining: "In the summer Ipswich Town Football Club, recently relegated to League One, told

their head groundsman his budget would be cut, and he'd also need to lose a member of staff – but the quality of the playing surface had to remain the same. This is just one example of the pressures turf professionals face in their working lives. We recognise it takes a unique discipline to work within the industry, so creating quality forums for discussion is an important part of what we do."

Turf Business are also thrilled to announce White Horse Contractors are proud sponsors of our 2019 Turf Summit in the Algarve. Working nationally, this Newbury based innovative company has been offering an inclusive and exceptional service in

designing, building and maintaining facilities for sports, leisure, amenity and the outdoor environment, since 1991.

Jason Douglass, Group Director says: "White Horse Contractors are delighted to be sponsoring the forthcoming Turf Business Summit. This important annual event brings together the best-in-class sportsturf suppliers with key operators from within the industry.

"To be part of the ongoing discussions into the current and future factors affecting our specialist industry is an important place for White Horse Contractors to be. The company was recently acquired by The Slatter Group, and now finds itself forging positively

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forward under new ownership and with renewed purpose."

With references including St George's Park, Chelsea FC's Training Ground, London 2012 Olympic Park and recent project successes including delivery of a new hybrid turf pitch for the Ricoh Arena match pitch for Wasps Rugby and Training Ground construction works for Luton Town FC, White Horse Contractors are an important addition to the 2019 Turf Business Summit.

Turf Business publisher Martin Smart says: "Turf Business and Research Engine are committed to prioritising the industry's most relevant issues ensuring the agenda reflects the concerns of the whole industry.

"Our two UK Summit events, at Manchester City FA's Etihad Stadium and the Question Time Event at St

George's Park, have helped build on previous discussions, as well as highlighting topics we will cover during our second Summit.

"In Portugal we'll be looking in depth at possible solutions to some of the challenges professionals face. Turf Business will continue to provide coverage and follow up on the many solutions and suggested initiatives revealed and discussed during the Summit."

With an 'invite only' format, this unique meeting of turfcare minds is one-of-a-kind in the business, welcoming elite groundsmen and greenkeepers from the UK, Europe and beyond.

Remember – the delegates will still set the agenda, do the talking, be the decision-makers and help to deliver solutions to benefit the industry.

[www.turfbusiness.co.uk/summit](http://www.turfbusiness.co.uk/summit)

## Your chance to attend the Summit

**It's the annual event many of our professionals simply don't want to miss – and to top dress it all, those completing the online survey will go into a Turf Business draw. The first two names drawn out will receive a special free invite to the Summit.**

**You'll enjoy two days of great hospitality, food, relaxation and debate in a world class luxury setting, completely on us.**

**So why not go online right now – and who knows, it could be you who gets the call to join us in the angelic Algarve on October 8th-10th.**

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