

Campey Grassroots News



Campey Turf Care Systems **Winter 2024**

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Campey Turf Care Systems announce partnership with Staffordshire FA

Campey Turf Care Systems and the Staffordshire Football Association have announced a formal partnership with the aim of improving the quality of grassroots pitches in the county.



Over the years as individual entities, both Campey and Staffordshire FA have championed the importance of quality pitches in grassroots football with a focus on increased participation in the game. Nationally, the Football Association aims to improve 20,000 grass pitches across England in the next decade, and whilst at the early stages of that journey, Staffordshire FA Partnerships and

Communications Officer, Gareth Thomas, is confident the county can play their part with the help of Campey.

"Since 2012 we've been working on various initiatives to raise the standards of grassroots football pitches in our county, and at the beginning of that process our local pitch advisor, Stoke City FC Grounds Manager, Andy Jackson, recommended Campey. We were also aware of Campey from the branding on many of the machines we saw during those early visits, along with the positive feedback we received from clubs," Gareth explains.

"We've had an informal relationship with Campey going back eight years, and we wanted to formalise that to continue to help more clubs across Staffordshire. With the support of Campey, we can keep developing our programme to make as big an impact as possible."

"One of the reasons our clubs provide positive feedback on Campey is the training that they receive when they invest in machinery, along with the ongoing aftercare. If a new club volunteer comes on board, someone from Campey is at the end of a telephone to talk them through it and if required visit the site."

"We've seen the benefit of that service already at local grassroots football facility sites such as Trubshaw Cross who took on a ten-pitch site from their local council in 2015 and have transformed the pitches with the help of advice and guidance from Campey."

"They are just one example; we've got some excellent case studies across Staffordshire where our programme has been really

beneficial to grassroots football. Having worked at the County FA for several years now, I think our grass pitch improvement programme has been one of our most positive and impactful programmes."

Despite the difficult situation facing grassroots football clubs since Covid-19 disrupted the sport in March 2020, many clubs have used it as an opportunity to improve their pitches via the programme and funding support from the Football Foundation.

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Since 2012 we've been working on various initiatives to raise the standards of grassroots football pitches in our county

Ensuring that clubs invest in the right machinery that will be a real asset to them is a key part of the programme and one that Campey – who have run numerous grassroots education days across England over the last ten years – are pleased to help with.

"These grants provide a real opportunity unlike anything they've ever had before for grassroots club to acquire machinery and improve their pitches and receive first rate training," Campey Director, John Campey, explains.

"We've worked with grassroots football clubs for a long time, so it's nice to be recognised and have the affiliation with Staffordshire FA. It puts us in a good position to help the groundsmen and get the machines out there and have people looking at the kit that will do the best for them."

"I think it's important to use the right machinery and for them to see it in action and get involved with it that way. With grant support, clubs can access current machinery that's easier to use and that encourages

volunteers and ultimately improves their pitches."

This partnership will see Campey support grassroots clubs on-site with training and machinery advice as well as contributions to the Staffordshire FA communication channels which will contain ongoing pitch maintenance advice throughout the season.

In the future, Campey aims to develop partnerships with more county football associations to strengthen their support of grassroots clubs in England.

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Dartfordians RFC upgrade with Campey Turf Care Systems

Dartfordians RFC has upgraded their maintenance operation with a Trimax Striker and New Holland Boomer 40 from Campey Turf Care Systems.

Time waits for no machine, and at London based Dartfordians RFC, that meant their old Massey Ferguson tractor and gang mowers needed to be replaced so they could continue to maintain the ground to a high standard. Replacing the machinery was a joint venture between the rugby and cricket club. Both operate the site under the DCSC which manages the building, bar and groundsman, Graham Smith, who was a member of the rugby club before becoming the groundsman four years ago.

As the sole groundsman – along with some volunteers – Graham is responsible for maintaining the three rugby pitches and football pitch in the winter as well as the cricket square and outfield in the summer.

Additionally, there is a park adjacent to the ground that is maintained by Graham in an ongoing arrangement between the rugby club and Bexley Council.

With the five-hectare site in constant use throughout the year, having reliable machinery is a must, and after speaking with Campey Product Specialist, Ben Taylor, Graham was confident Campey could provide what they needed.

“I’m really impressed with Ben. He’s very amenable, he talks straight, and he knew what we wanted and put together a deal that was very acceptable with us and we are looking forward to a good long relationship with equipment in the future,” Graham began.

“I think the customer service side of it is very

important and it’s a big consideration when we’re buying machines. You could go somewhere else and buy a tractor, and with money constraints we could have ended up buying a second hand one without any warranty. As we bought new we have that and we know if we want to add to it in the future with a bucket or similar things like that we’ll get all the help we need.

“You want it to start, to run and a good amount of power and everything to work. With the period we’d gone through with our old machinery breaking down we’re now in a new zone. It becomes very critical at times [having reliable machinery] and really you should always have a backup and that’s what we needed. Equipment fails and suddenly you’re stuck and if it was in the cricket season

and we couldn’t cut the grass then they wouldn’t be able to play and likewise with the rugby. We need to maintain the pitches and keep them cut to the right length to encourage growth.

“It’s going to make my life a lot easier with the new kit. On our particular tractor we’ve got the oversized grass tyres so there is no damage on the pitches. That’ll be especially important in the winter because we’ll still have the ability to drive across a pitch without doing any damage, whereas our old tractor had agricultural tyres and there were times of the year where you wouldn’t drive it onto a pitch.

“Having had the tractor for a few weeks now I’ve found it very good, and it’s proved to be a very good piece of machinery. Because it’s 40hp I’ve found that I can run the mower in the economy mode which cuts down the revs and saves fuel, and the tractor being powerful enough to do that is a really good thing. I think the Trimax and the way it works along with the bearings that are guaranteed for life shows the confidence that Trimax have in their own machine.”

The rugby club brings a lot of value to their local area with men’s, women’s, junior and academy rugby catering for people from U11’s and upwards. Their Dartfordians 1st XV were promoted to London1 South at the end of the 2018-19 season, an impressive feat for a community club, and have consolidated their position in the league.

Providing high quality surfaces for all of the players is the top priority for Graham, and after the initial investment he hopes the club can take advantage of their new tractor and invest in more equipment in the future.



Unicorn Athletic JFC takes control with Campey ground maintenance equipment

In March 2020, after 20-years of vying for control of their main Smiths Field site from Trafford Council, Unicorn Athletic JFC has begun life in charge with equipment from Campey Turf Care Systems.

The club is home to 34 teams and operates at different schools and pitches in the local area, with their main site used by the under-8's Saturday club, youth teams from 14 years old and upwards and their open age group teams.

The New Holland Boomer 35, Trimax 190 Striker and SISIS Quadraplay will be vital for the community club as they aim to improve the condition of their site. The story of their pitches over two decades is a sadly familiar one, with budgets cuts in the council leading to less and less maintenance and inconsistent mowing.

For Darren Storey, treasurer, part-time groundsman and operator of the walking football team, finally taking control of the maintenance will allow the club to give

children playing in their teams the pitches they deserve.

"It was unbelievable to use the new stuff. To be honest, I felt like I was ten. It was like being a kid in a candy shop," Darren began. "The whole field was cut in an hour, and it looks the part because it's been done with proper grounds maintenance machinery, and it looks exactly as our kids deserve.

"In the past when the council hasn't cut the grass, we've begged, stole and borrowed petrol mowers and cut it by hand with a team of volunteers but those days have long gone hopefully.

"We started the process by speaking to one of the subcontractors that works for Trafford Council, Paul Grange, who has worked on

our pitches and helped us with stuff in the past. Over the years the pitches have been in shocking condition because Trafford had no money. So, we used to pay extra money out of our own funds to get them upgraded.

“Campey Campey has been ace

"Campey has been ace. From costing, to specifications and the equipment that we needed, and more importantly could afford, they've been great. They kept us updated at each stage, and we asked for upgrades like a tracker on the tractor, and although they don't normally do it, they sorted it. We put a grant application into the

Football Foundation which they helped us with, and without that, we wouldn't have the equipment, so John Campey and his team have been very good."

With the first cut of many completed on the day of delivery and installation in late July 2020, Darren and the club are already looking at ways they can improve the wider area. Because it is a community field, they want to make it better for everyone, not just the players, and a part of this plan is creating a Friends of Smiths Field group. By doing this they hope to raise funds that will allow them to improve the landscaping, put in nature and fitness trails and complete other projects to make it a more usable area for the wider community.



Kiveton Park FC Take Pitches to the next level with a Tractor and Mower from Campey Turf Care Systems

Kiveton Park Football Club's team of volunteer grounds people are aiming to take their pitches to the next level following the arrival of a New Holland Boomer 40 and Trimax Striker from Campey Turf Care Systems.

The Yorkshire based club restructured three years ago and moved from their previous site to Wales High School. When they arrived, there was one football pitch on the school's front field with burnt in lines and plenty of work to do. Progress was quickly made at the school, and one pitch turned into eight, but when their mower broke down, and they had to use a smaller option that took them over three hours to cut the pitches with, the decision was made to invest in new equipment.

The vast improvement of the site has been led by the enthusiasm and growing knowledge of club secretary Gordon Johnson. He, along with a team of volunteers, now maintain pitches that are recognised for their quality.

"I've got a passion for groundsmanship

which I found when we moved to the school," Gordon explained. "The Sheffield FA pointed us towards the Grounds Management Association, and we became members and signed up to the FA's Pitch Improvement Programme. From there, I got really into it and did a level one course, and I've progressed from what I learnt on my level one with more maintenance techniques to try and get more games on. This year I did my level two at Stockport County FC, which was brilliant, and I absolutely loved it.

"It was through a coaching course that I got involved with Campey. One of the FA Tutors told me we could apply for an equipment grant from the Football Foundation and the amount was significantly higher than before so as a grassroots club we didn't have to put as much money in.

"I applied for it, and the guys at the Sheffield FA were brilliant and guided me through it. I did a lot of homework based on the Pitch Improvement Programme because it tells you what equipment you might need. I Googled searched it and found an article that explained how Campey had done a similar thing with another grassroots

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Campey was absolutely brilliant with us. I got talking to Simon Holland, who was superb.

club and the guy from that club was sitting in his tractor and I thought we could have that.

"Campey was absolutely brilliant with us. I got talking to Simon Holland, who was superb. He was asking me all the right questions like do we want turf tyres – which we would have probably missed – and other little questions like that. We spoke about whether we were planning to just cut or do other things with the tractor and we are, so he suggested a manual gear system rather than a foot pedal which is better for the volunteers. It was advice like that which really helped us.

"With the money we saved in those areas, we were able to get a better quality cutting deck with the Trimax Striker, which again Simon suggested, and it's a brilliant bit of kit. We were ready to get them just before COVID-19, so the machines were sat in their yard until they could complete the installation safely. But when we did get them, they were absolutely brilliant. They came out and showed us the machines and went through all the care aspects as well. They didn't want to just deliver it, they wanted to give us that bit extra customer care and go that extra mile, and I was really impressed with that."

The quality of pitches has gone full circle at Kiveton Park FC from burnt in lines to hosting League Cup Finals, and with the new machinery, Gordon hopes to take them even further. Before the New Holland arrived Kiveton's passionate band of volunteers aerated and scarified the pitches lengthways and widthways using pedestrian machines, taking one day per pitch across eight pitches.

Now they have the option to hire in larger machinery and reduce their need for contractors which will allow them to redistribute funds into their other community projects while letting carry out essential maintenance when it's needed most.

"We know we'll get more matches on if the structure of the pitches is better and with the last few years we've had with the weather it's become really important. We've just had several dry weeks and now had a bit of rain and the pitches have come up fantastically, but we've done more in terms of maintenance than ever and done it at the right time which we've learnt.

"With the new tractor we can look at hiring in equipment or buying second-hand gear, and it gives us the opportunity to take our playing surfaces to the next level. We can start thinking differently because instead of hiring a contractor to come in and aerate we can hire the machine ourselves at a lower cost and do it ourselves. We're inexperienced grounds people, but doing these things is how you learn, and there are plenty of forums on Facebook and videos on YouTube which are fantastic to learn from."

The club is also aiming to use this investment as an opportunity to introduce young people at the school to grounds maintenance. Currently, they run coaching courses for sixth form students but are aiming to expand that into pitch maintenance. This is just one example of how they intend to further include the local community with a grant application recently accepted for a renovation that will transform their current refreshments area into a café and classroom space.

Improving the pitches has been, and will continue to be, a crucial part of Kiveton Park's growth as they aim to play more games, provide more consistent outdoor PE lessons for pupils at the school and host more prestigious events such as cup finals.

Campey offers detailed help and advice before, during and after purchasing to grassroots clubs who are looking to invest in their own machinery.

For more information, contact your local Campey product specialist, dealer or email info@campeyurfcare.com

Campey Machines helping to drive Sport England pilot scheme forward

Campey Turf Care Systems has supplied three machines to Mel Pooley, who is spearheading a pilot scheme for Sport England to improve natural turf surfaces at grassroots level.

First were the Imants ShockWave and a Dakota Spreader, with a Vredo Overseeder DZ the latest machine to be purchased to expand the works offered. The venture encompasses sports pitches in Cambridge and Huntingdon and almost 70 clubs from varying sports were included last year.

Mel has been involved since the project started two years ago and has seen a massive uptake from football, rugby and cricket, and hopes that the addition of the Vredo can help the scheme drive forward and continue to improve local pitches.

"We want to give the areas of Cambridge and Huntingdon the benefit of professional machinery used by professionals to help improve grassroots surfaces," he explained.

"We operate by providing them with a priority list starting with that they need to do, what they should do if they have enough money, and then what the ultimate works would be if they can afford to have it done.

"But we are very careful to take into consideration that a lot of these small clubs have limited financial resources and in some cases no money at all. We've also started seeing a lot of parish councils come on board, and we are able to take on three-year contracts, which are great for us going forward."

The program run by Sport England carries the same goals as Campey's own Pitch Renovation Tour, which also highlights the need for improvements on grassroots pitches, and Mel is adamant that the Campey machines have helped make the project a success.

As a pilot scheme Mel was aware that ensuring work was carried out to a high standard at the first time of asking was imperative, both for the reputation of the project and to ensure maximum value for money.

"We started off with the Imants ShockWave and Dakota Topdresser and with those machines at our disposal we were in the position to do a lot of the work, but now we have the Vredo we can carry out a better overall job in the spring.

"We know it will put the seed in good contact with the soil, and it has a fantastic germination rate because of it, and that's why we wanted it.



Teams will want to start playing in a couple of months, and you only get one chance, so that's why we chose the Vredo, it stands out as a class machine and we know it will deliver great results."

The achievements so far show have illustrated that using the right machinery can make a massive difference to the playing surfaces, improving playing conditions and so increasing the desire to play on them. This is vital for keeping sport alive at grassroots level.

What a team

Your dedication and our expert knowledge

Our goal is to help grassroots sports facilities improve their playing surfaces by sharing knowledge gained working with leading turf care professionals on the worlds finest sports surfaces.



“ We're very grateful to be able to partner with such a clearly well established and very professional organisation as Campey. We can't speak highly enough about their input all the way through this process

Chris Wood,
Chair of Trustees,
Abbots Bromley Sports Association

“ The whole field was cut in an hour, and it looks the part because it's been done with proper grounds maintenance machinery, and it looks exactly as our kids deserve.

Darren Storey,
Treasurer and Part-Time Groundsman,
Unicorn Athletic JFC

“ Campey has been going out to sites to demo products and taking clubs through that process of what the machinery and equipment can do, how to use it properly and then all the aftercare is really beneficial.

Oliver Hitchcox,
Birmingham County Football Association
Facility and Investment Lead



Campey Turf Care Systems Strengthens Support of Grassroots Football

Numerous grassroots clubs have received assistance from Campey when looking to bring their turf maintenance in-house for the first time or simply invest in new machinery. Kiveton Park FC was aiming to take their pitches up a level, and through the help of Campey Product Specialist Simon Holland, they were able to get the advice they needed.

"Campey was absolutely brilliant with us," Kiveton Park FC Club Secretary Gordon Johnson explained. "I got talking to Simon Holland, who was superb; he was asking me all the right questions like do we want turf tyres – which we would have probably missed – and other little questions like that. We spoke about whether we were planning to just cut or do other things with the tractor, and we are, so he suggested a manual gear system rather than a foot pedal which is better for the volunteers. It was advice like that which really helped us."

As well as advice, grassroots clubs rely on practical demonstrations and responsive aftercare to make sure they get the best from their new machinery, as Earlestown Athletic JFC Chairman, Carl Hollingsworth, explained.

"Once we realised we could get it and raise the money we needed, Campey were brilliant in bringing a mower to demonstrate, and Ethan especially has been great. He's been brilliant in taking my phone calls after work as we went through the process, and on the day he dropped the machine off, he spent hours going through it with the coaches and me."

In late 2020 Campey took their support of grassroots sport one step further and announced they would be working with Staffordshire County FA to increase the quality of local pitches, with the Football Association striving to improve 20,000

pitches across England in the next decade.

Soon after, another partnership working towards the same goals with Birmingham County FA (BCFA) was announced, with Campey's dedication to grassroots sports and their exceptional customer service a motivating factor for both associations.

BCFA's Facility and Investment Lead, Oliver Hitchcox, explained: "The vast majority of the reports that we get identify a need for new or additional maintenance kit and equipment. We've signposted a lot of clubs for funding towards that equipment so often because clubs don't have a huge amount of expertise in that area, and they tend to come to me or our Grounds Management Association Regional Pitch Advisor, Kevin Duffill, asking for the best places to get quotes. We'd already had a fair few clubs who had engaged with Campey and were really enthusiastic about the support they had from them."

Despite the difficult situation facing grassroots football clubs since Covid-19 disrupted the sport in March 2020, many have used it as an opportunity to improve their pitches using the 75% funding that the FA offered.

Ensuring clubs spent that money on machinery that will benefit them was a key part of the programme and one that Campey – who has run numerous grassroots education days over the last ten years – are pleased to help with.

Staffordshire CFA Communications and Relationships Officer, Gareth Thomas, has already seen how Campey has helped local clubs in the area improve their pitches, and he is now looking forward to the positive impact the partnership will make.

"We've had an informal relationship with Campey going back eight years, and we wanted to formalise that to help clubs in Staffordshire. What we're trying to do with this partnership is raise some investment ourselves to reinvest into the programme and hopefully keep taking it up through the levels."


"We've seen the benefit of that service already at local clubs such as Trubshaw Cross Ladsandads who took on a ten-pitch site on from the council in 2016 and have transformed them with the help of funding and advice from Campey."

Trubshaw Cross has worked with Campey in 2016 and 2018 and has gone from very little knowledge to hosting their own GMA Level 1 course. Then Chairman of the club, Andy Salt, initiated the pitch improvements, and the club has gone from strength to strength ever since.


Speaking in 2018, Andy said: "The improvements we have made here has meant we've almost doubled in team numbers, and that was part of the grant application to get the new tractor. It's about everything else we can do. That one tractor isn't just about making the pitches better, it gets more teams playing, and then you need more referees, so we're training more of them, and then the café gets busier, so we're employing more volunteers for that, so it's the whole picture of it, it isn't just a tractor."


Trubshaw Cross are one of many clubs that have benefited from the help and advice of Campey, who has run independent Pitch Improvement Days for over a decade, with the aim always being to educate volunteers about what is best for their pitch and how they can raise the quality.

Campey Turf Care aim to provide customers with honest, practical turf care advice and quality of service call **+44 (0)1260 224568**, email **info@campeyturfcare.com**, or visit **www.campeyturfcare.com**

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Campey puts pitch operation into the hands of Sandgate Youth Football Club

Campey has supplied Hayes based football club, Sandgate Youth FC, with four vital pieces of equipment to help the club take control of their own pitch operations after continual let downs from their local council.

The New Holland Boomer 35 tractor, Trimax Striker, Sisis Quadraplay and Sisis Maxislit were purchased by the club through a Football Foundation grant, after securing the deal for £3000 less than the nearest competitor. The club has been given a new lease of life when it comes to maintaining its pitches.

Problems were encountered by the club who have over 200 boys and girls from under-7 to under-16 age groups when the local authority maintenance schedule only allowed for 16 cuts from March to October, with two dates in April and May being missed on the six pitches.

However, club secretary Steve Kennedy has explained that with the help of the new equipment the entire club has had a lift, and after seeing the first cut with their new Trimax Striker, he himself couldn't be happier with the machines.

"We've had our issues with the local authority maintenance schedule because it in no way met

the requirements for good playing conditions," Steve began.

"When they missed some cuts our own old equipment was nowhere near powerful enough to cut the long grass, and that's what makes these new machines so invaluable to us.

"The initial reaction we had when we showed everyone the tractor was jaw dropping.

"And then when they saw how it and the mower performed together it was like a weight was lifted off our shoulders, and when we used it through some long grass it was even better.

"We have volunteers cutting the grass, and they are the football coaches as well, so the less time they have to spend cutting means they have more time to focus on training the kids, and they might even get some time at home!"

Being able to produce and maintain high quality pitches is a top priority for the club, as it helps to reflect their

commitment to their own development whilst proving a useful recruitment tool in a competitive football area.

As well as being able to dictate their own cutting schedule the club are looking at aerating some damp on-pitch areas with the Maxislit and some off pitch areas, which will be used to train on. The volunteer grounds team will soon receive their training from Campey to ensure they can get the best out of the machines, and Steve is keen to point out the invaluable help and support he has received from the company the whole way through the process.

"The people I've spoken to at Campey have been fantastic, everyone from Max the delivery driver to Richard Campey couldn't have been more helpful," he said.

"Richard obviously has years and years of experience in the industry and you can tell that straight away.

"He considered what was needed to meet all of our current needs as well as providing equipment for future improvement. The aftercare and training has been excellent."



Daten FC invest in new Campey equipment for Culcheth Sports Club

After 20-years of using the same tractor, originally purchased from Campey Turf Care Systems, a £10,000 grant from the Premier League and FA Facilities Fund has provided the means for Daten Football Club to upgrade their maintenance equipment for use at Culcheth Sports Club, Warrington, where the amateur team play their home games.

In the place of their ailing tractor and select few attachments the club were able to get state of the art machinery in the form of a New Holland Boomer 25 Tractor with a Trimax Striker 150 and a Sisis Quadraplay.

Culcheth Sports Club is maintained by groundsman, Ian Trantum. Ian has been working on the site for 30-years, and made the original tractor purchase some 21 years ago.

Having got more use than could possibly have been envisaged from the equipment in the intervening years, Ian was aware it was way past time for an upgrade from the metal seated machine that had served him so well. And with such proven reliability he was happy to work with Campey again.

"I bought the old tractor from Campey twenty years ago," he explained.

"And even then it was second hand, but it was state of the art for a compact

tractor at the time. However, they've moved on a lot since then – it's like going from a Vauxhall Viva to a Ferrari!

Given the limitations of the funding Ian Campbell, UK & Ireland Sales Manager for Campeys, was able to advise on the most cost effective tractor and implements to ensure maximum improvement and maintenance benefits to the club.

"This new equipment is going to make my job a lot easier and it's also going to improve the pitches a lot and that's the most important thing for us.

"Up until now all we had for working on football pitches was a set of old spikers and a drag chain, so the tractor and attachments will make a massive difference."

Adverse weather has meant Ian hasn't been able to fully utilise the Trimax Striker 150 and Sisis Quadraplay, barring one outing of the Trimax

mower. Now he is looking forward to starting work with the new grant funded equipment as soon as he can.

Along with the new equipment Campeys have also continued their support of grass roots football by sponsoring the kit for the Daten FC Vets team until the end of the 2016-17 seasons, with the team currently top of the Cheshire Vets league.

The Premier League, The FA and the Government – via Sport England – fund the Premier League and FA Facilities Fund, which is delivered by the Football Foundation, who are the country's largest sport charity.

Working with the Lancashire FA, Daten FC was able to secure a grant of £10,000 towards the equipment while the remaining balance was raised by the football club.

The money was secured through the work of Stuart Nightingale, chairman of Daten FC and club member Donald Borland. Speaking about the impact of the new machinery Stuart said: "These modern, purpose built machines and accessories will enable us to maintain the pitches and help us to attract new players and to secure the club for a good number of years."



Campey provide speed and precision at Stone Dominoes Football Club with Vredo Compact Seeder



Quick and precise seeding is essential at Stone Dominoes Football Club with the vast Staffordshire site in constant use, and Campey Turf Care Systems has provided a Vredo DZ 214 Compact Seeder to help them meet their aims.

34 teams have played on the ten pitch site this season meaning in excess of 1000 matches, with the number of teams set to go up to 40 for the 2016/17 season. Games include those from the Stone Dominoes F.C teams, tournaments, local cup finals and fixtures for Stoke City Football Club youth teams.

Having such a congested fixture list means site manager, Dave Rhodes, is only afforded four weeks between the last ball being kicked and activity returning, all with the added challenge of having no on-site irrigation.

With this in mind, Dave needed a seeder that could cater to his working conditions whilst providing precision passes and a high germination rate to give excellent return value for the investment, and after seeing the Vredo in action he looked no further.

"I first came across the Vredo Compact Seeder during a demonstration that Campey were doing," he began.

"The accuracy really impressed me, and its ability to plant the seed directly into the soil is also something that really stood out for me. Those qualities combined with the high germination rate made it an ideal fit for the club.

"There is quite a bit of pressure to get our renovations completed quickly because we only get a four-week gap between finishing and starting up again, so we needed a quick and accurate machine.

Dave operates the Vredo using a New Holland Boomer 50 ground care tractor, which he also acquired from Campey, with the seeder adding to the high-quality equipment the club at their disposal to deal with a congested fixture list.

The precision nature of the machine

comes from the V-shaped disks that place the seed directly in the ground at a pre-set depth, which can be adjusted between 5mm and 25mm deep.

Once the seed is in direct contact with the soil the slit is closed by the compaction roller, re-establishing a level surface and providing the conditions for maximum germination, as Dave has found on the various contracting jobs he's used the seeder on.

"I've used the machine at a number of small grassroots clubs in the Potteries, like Eccleshall F.C, Stafford Rangers F.C, Abbey Hulton F.C, Stanton F.C, and also on a golf course, and it's worked really well on all of them," he said.

"The first lot of pitches we did just over two weeks ago have started to come up really well with a great germination rate, so it's doing exactly what we wanted from it.

"I've been really pleased with the machine since we've started using it, and have no doubt that we'll get the same great results on our own site in time for the start of a really busy season."

Sandbach Rugby Club have self-sustainability plan for Imants ShockWave

As well as using the Imants ShockWave – provided by Campey Turf Care Systems – on their own site, Sandbach Rugby Club plan to hire the machine out with an operator to generate extra-income, allowing the machine to pay for itself.

This approach is being adopted by an increasing number of grassroots clubs who have seen machines, such as the ShockWave, as an investment that can be self-sufficient, allowing them to purchase higher-quality machines.

For groundsman, Richard Vaughan, the money spent is not only an investment in the pitches, but also on himself, and he looks forward to the end of the 2016/17 season when he's confident the ShockWave will have shown everyone what it can do.

"The club are investing in the club, the pitches, and me," he began.

"That puts a certain amount of pressure on me to make sure I make the correct decisions, and I'm confident that I'll be able to tell them at the end of the season that we got all of the fixtures on due to the ShockWave.

"The club are also looking to rent the machine out to local golf courses and other sports teams, and we hope that the machine will pay for itself in the long-run, rather than sitting in the shed whilst it's not in use.

"I think this method of doing things will be very beneficial for the club, because it has allowed us to invest in a high-quality machine that by improving the pitches will bring wider benefits to the club."

As a consequence of the club's reputation to produce good playing surfaces, the number of games has risen steadily over the five-years that Richard has worked there. However, the higher level of use led to some maintenance issues, with compaction the main concern

Imants ShockWave was exactly what they needed to relieve compaction, and keep the surfaces at the high-standard they wanted throughout the season.

"We have a compaction problem on the pitches that's mainly down to increased

can't get on their own fields.

"But, the more play we had the more compaction we had, to the point where we had to do something about it, which then lead us to the ShockWave.

"The machine is good us for us because it does exactly what we need it to do. It gives me the ability to carry out constant decompaction throughout the year, so there won't be a point during the season where it becomes a problem.

"We are able to play the same day that the work is carried out, which is a big benefit for us due to the game schedule we've got."

The fantastic results the club has already seen from the machine allows visiting



on the five full sized pitches and the junior pitches.

In response to this problem Richard and the Grounds Secretary, Rob Perkins, began extensive research into the best machine available decided that an

use through extra games and competitions," Richard explained.

"During the five years I've worked here we've seen an increase of games coming to us during the winter to play their games because they

teams to see the difference it has made in maintaining the pitches, whilst furthering the prospects of local clubs wanting to use it to tackle compaction on their pitches.



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Imants ShockWave plays its part for award winning groundsman at Cheshire County Sports Club

Campey Turf Care Systems has supplied an Imants Shockwave to Freddie Brickland, head groundsman at Cheshire County Sports Club, who was recently named as the Cheshire FA Groundsman of the Year for 2016.

The accolade is even more impressive when taking into consideration the fact that the site of six football pitches, one rugby pitch, two mini football pitches, one 9 v 9 pitch and two artificial hockey pitches is all maintained by Freddie and his assistant, Kyle Witley.

With only two members of staff and a packed fixture list, the importance of using the correct machinery is paramount in order to keep games on, and keep money flowing through the club.

"We've had a really bad winter, combined with a lot of

games, and it's not unusual for one pitch to have four games during a weekend, with morning and afternoon kick-offs," Freddie began.

"With that much use on a pitch you're always going to get compaction, so the aim was managing that.

"I spoke to various people before we purchased the machine and they all recommended going for the ShockWave, so we had a couple of demos just to show everyone at the club how well it could work for us, so after seeing it they were happy for us to get it, and we haven't

looked back since.

"It's perfect for us, surface disruption is minimal and that keeps all the users happy, because there's nothing worse when the ball bobbles over the pitch after work has been done to it, so that's a massive advantage of the ShockWave."

Like most groundsman up and down the country Freddie has had to endure a difficult winter, which has made compaction a more prevalent issue than usual. The ShockWave is designed to revitalise heavy wear areas by relieving this compaction, whilst improving aeration and removing surface water.

The revenue brought in from teams using the bar after games is vital for the club, with some teams opting to rearrange games at a local artificial pitch, putting more pressure on the award winning team of two to ensure fixtures are played.

"Back in the day if a game was called off it would be rearranged for later in the season so we wouldn't lose any revenue from the match fee and the bar revenue, which is the most important thing for us," Freddie said.

"These days, if a game is called off due to rain, teams will go to the 3G option at the local University or wherever it may be, so keeping games on is really important, it's probably more important now than it ever has been.

"The ShockWave has really helped us keep the pitches at a high standard, and the support we've received from Jason Lord at Campey has also been exceptional, be it bringing the machine for demos or giving us any information we might need."

For more information email info@campeyturfcare.com



Campey provide the machines for Trubshaw Cross Ladsandads to self-manage marked improvements to their pitches

Campey Turf Care Systems has provided Trubshaw Cross Ladsandads with a number of turf care machines after they took over maintenance of their pitches from the local council.

Despite their being a timeframe of two-years in place for the football hub to take over the maintenance from Stoke-On-Trent City council, chairman Andy Salt was only given two weeks' notice that they would be handing over control.

Andy and his team of volunteers didn't allow that to hold them back, and 12-months on he speaks with pride at the quality surfaces they are now able to produce, and the benefits regular games brings to the teams and the club financially.

After attending a Campey pitch improvement event at Stafford Rangers, Andy became aware that a budget of £500 for 11 pitches wouldn't be enough. He and the club set about raising money for the new equipment whilst involving FA pitch mentor Andy Jackson – head groundsman at Stoke City FC

At this point Campey had been recommended on a number of occasions to Andy, who in order to get a new tractor, Imants ShockWave 155, Sisis Twin Play, Dragmat, Raycam Sportfield and later

a TriMax roller mower Trubshaw Cross took a different approach.

“Andy Jackson suggested we spoke with Richard Campey of Campey Turf Care Systems, and we'd had other clubs recommend them to us as well, so we decided to approach them. Richard came out and had a good look around the site and at the pitch, and from there we went on to buy the machinery.

“Even having the equipment for half of the last season made such a difference. We didn't have games called off due to weather as many times as the other centres in our area, and we've been able to reduce that even more.

The 11 pitch site, based in Burslem, is one of nine Ladsandads branches that provide a place for youngsters to play football. Six different clubs in North Staffordshire consisting of 39 teams regard Trubshaw Cross as home, as well as the pitches being hired out to other teams, and such extensive use means high-quality pitches were needed to accommodate the matches.

Rather than going down the popular Sport England grant route – instead wanting to save such funding for building improvements – the club opted to host a tournament, with the proceeds used to invest in the café, which has now generated the income to purchase all of the machines.

“

We've seen an absolutely massive difference in the pitches.

In the 12-months since they took over Trubshaw Cross have gone from having a “cheap second-hand ride-on lawn mower” to a full range of purpose bought machinery, with their needs specifically in mind.

A team of five volunteers – including Andy – operate the machines and were given full training to help them utilise what they had bought, culminating in the pitches the teams now play on.



the next level, and this is all a result of me working with the Campey Turf Care team."

With the new kit in place, Richard's hard work is being acknowledged by visiting teams and others from outside their league. Numerous charity events are held at the club, as well as Strike Nine summer camps run by former Birmingham City striker Dele Adebola.

With aims to move into the football league, Richard's efforts are instrumental in helping the club he has a 13-year relationship with reach the next level.

"It took a couple of years because of Covid and lockdowns, but we still had to try and cut the pitches. We had a mower that was broken and wasn't doing, and we just needed the new equipment.



"The tractor and other equipment have really helped these pitches out. I've been able to do a lot more with the tractor, like hiring an overseeder, and it all helps improve the pitches. Being able to work when we need to is unbelievably good, and we're looking to add an overseeder or a ShockWave so we have extra equipment that can help us out.

"We've been told how fantastic our first team pitch is to play on and how it looks. That's by our own teams and away teams, and we're really proud of that."

Above and Beyond at Leaffield Athletic FC

A New Holland tractor, Trimax Striker 190, and SISIS Quadraplay has made the difference for Leaffield Athletic FC, but it's the customer service from Campey™ Product Specialist Jason Moody that has made the biggest impact.

Established in the 1970s, Leaffield is one of the oldest youth clubs in the Midlands, and founding members of the Warwickshire League, which they've played in for 53 years. Now the club has 25 teams playing every week.

With ten pitches across three sites, club groundsman and facilities manager Richard Pittaway spearheaded the fundraising campaign to purchase the machinery. However, due to Covid, clubs were required to submit their own pitch assessments, and this is when Jason stepped in to help.

"I first contacted Campey™ just before the first lockdown, and at that point, we found out we needed to submit our own

pitch inspections," Richard explains. "Jason came out and helped me because I wasn't sure where to start.

"He helped me go through it, and we did every pitch, and I couldn't have done it without him, and that's why I went

“

The service is brilliant, and I recommend Campey™ to everybody

with Campey Turf Care. Jason went above and beyond to help me out so we could get the tractor.

"When we did get the equipment, he ran me through everything and made sure

I knew all of the controls, and if there is a problem, I can phone Campey™, and they'll be straight onto it. The service is brilliant, and I recommend Campey™ to everybody in the area.



"When I was at the Birmingham FA Groundsman's convention, Jason introduced me to different companies who could help us, and that has been great for us too. They've helped us take this to



machines have helped make the project a success.

As a pilot scheme Mel was aware that ensuring work was carried out to a high standard at the first time of asking was imperative, both for the reputation of the project and to ensure maximum value for money.

“We started off with the Imants ShockWave and Dakota Topdresser and with those machines at our disposal we were in the position to do a lot of the work, but now we have the Vredo we can carry out a better overall job in the spring.

“

We know it will put the seed in good contact with the soil, and it has a fantastic germination rate because of it, and that’s why we wanted it.

“We know it will put the seed in good contact with the soil, and it has a fantastic germination rate because of it, and that’s why we wanted it. Teams will want to start playing in a couple of months, and you only get one chance, so that’s why we chose the Vredo, it stands out as a class machine and we know it will deliver great results.”

The achievements so far show have illustrated that using the right machinery can make a massive difference to the playing surfaces, improving playing conditions and so increasing the desire to play on them. This is vital for keeping sport alive at grassroots level.

Campey Machines helping to drive Sport England pilot scheme forward

Campey Turf Care Systems has supplied three machines to Mel Pooley, who is spearheading a pilot scheme for Sport England to improve natural turf surfaces at grassroots level. First were the Imants ShockWave and a Dakota Spreader, with a Vredo Overseeder DZ the latest machine to be purchased to expand the works offered.

The venture encompasses sports pitches in Cambridge and Huntingdon and almost 70 clubs from varying sports were included last year.

Mel has been involved since the project started two years ago and has seen a massive uptake from football, rugby and cricket, and hopes that the addition of the Vredo can help the scheme drive forward and continue to improve local pitches.

“We want to give the areas of Cambridge and Huntingdon

the benefit of professional machinery used by professionals to help improve grassroots surfaces,” he explained.

“We operate by providing them with a priority list starting with that they need to do, what they should do if they have enough money, and then what the ultimate works would be if they can afford to have it done.

“But we are very careful to take into consideration that a lot of these small clubs have

limited financial resources and in some cases no money at all. We’ve also started seeing a lot of parish councils come on board, and we are able to take on three-year contracts, which are great for us going forward.”

The program run by Sport England carries the same goals as Campey’s own Pitch Renovation Tour, which also highlights the need for improvements on grassroots pitches, and Mel is adamant that the Campey



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