



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE CIRCULATION

May 28th 2013

Excellent progress but still more to do

John Moverley, Independent Chairman of the Amenity Forum, said these words at a recent conference in Manchester. He was referring to the Forum's continuing campaign to drive up standards and promote best practice in weed, pest and disease control across the amenity sector. He said "We have many excellent examples of good practice providing exemplars for all and it is pleasing that membership of the Forum continues to increase. However there are still those who are not up to standard and by so doing threaten the sector as a whole and importantly increase risk to all involved". He urged everyone to adopt Amenity Assured standards as the benchmark demonstrating commitment to best practice. He also urged those awarding contracts especially local authorities to ensure they not only looked at cost in their awarding decisions but also risk minimisation. The Forum has a range of best practice guidelines and he asked that these are integrated into all specifications. "Becoming a member of the Amenity Forum is a demonstration of commitment in itself" he said, "We are a voluntary initiative established to demonstrate that the sector is a safe one with emphasis on very best performance and operations"

The conference was organised by Japanese Knotweed Solutions and marked the launch of INNSA – the invasive non-native specialists association. It has been established to demonstrate that members of INNSA have the professional knowledge and understanding and employ correct methods for their eradication. Also speaking at the conference was Rob Simpson, CEO of BASIS. He provided information on the Amenity Assured standard and, like John, emphasised the need for best practice and standards. BASIS are an active member of the Amenity Forum. He said that "the Amenity Assured standard has the backing of Government "

Recently all Chief Executives of Local Authorities have received a letter from the Chemicals Regulation Directive emphasising the need to follow best practice guidelines and minimise risk when involved in operations of weed, pest and disease control. The letter also emphasises important changes arising from enactment of legislation to implement the Sustainable Use Directive and the water framework.

In concluding his address, John Moverley urged everyone involved in amenity to attend the special conference being held on October 17th at Leicester City FC. He said, "There is an excellent range of speakers and exhibitors and the focus will be very much on practical matters, making sense of recent policy changes and technical challenges. However, just as important is that through attending, we are demonstrating commitment. We seek for this to be one of the most important dates of 2013 – a demonstration that the whole sector supports best practice and improving standards"

Further information on this press release or the conference on October 17th is available from Alan Spedding, Secretary to the Forum, at Alan.Spedding@amenityforum.co.uk

Notes to Editors

The Amenity Forum is the independent body bringing together professional organisations with an involvement in the amenity horticulture sector. This is a very diverse industry responsible for the landscape management of urban areas, highways and rail network, sports grounds, parks, industrial and utility sites. To establish and maintain these areas to a high standard, the sector requires access to pesticides, efficient equipment and trained and qualified staff. The organisation was formed in October 2003 as a key action to support the Voluntary Initiative, an industry led project agreed with Government to reduce the environmental impact of pesticides.

The membership comprises of organisations from across this diverse industry, covering manufacturers, suppliers, trade associations, local authorities, major users, landscape, sport and leisure. Equally important are those members who represent training and qualification standards. The key Government agencies have an important observer role. The objectives of the Amenity Forum are:

- *To be the collective body representing the amenity industry, in relation to pesticide use*
- *To lead, coordinate and encourage achievement of "Best Practice" objectives in amenity pesticide use*
- *To coordinate and encourage the establishment of sustainable qualifications, training and CPD activity, specifically for the amenity sector*
- *To organise activities within the Amenity Forum membership and linked organisations, such that Amenity Forum objectives are developed in a coordinated way*

For further information on this press release or the work of the Forum, please contact the Secretary, Alan Spedding, or the Chairman, Professor John Moverley OBE. Similarly if you wish to register for future press releases, please let us know.

postmaster@amenityforum.co.uk
Alan.spedding@amenityforum.co.uk

or

email

John.Moverley@amenityforum.co.uk

or