



John Moverley reacts to the trigger of Article 50

The events about the triggering of Article 50 have been numerous and have kept and will keep the media busy. In both the run up to the vote, and indeed after it, there were and have been varying statements of optimism and doom and gloom. . However, as I write, Article 50 has been triggered and the task can begin in implementing the decision made at the ballot box. I have always been someone who sees challenges as opportunities. Yes, change naturally creates uncertainties and there will be real and significant impacts on business in many ways. However, it is important that, whatever our views on BREXIT, we now accept the position and adapt and manage accordingly.

In correspondence to me, many have sought clarification on how BREXIT might impact upon the area of weed, pest and disease control. The fact is that, certainly in terms of regulation and control, nothing changes and is very unlikely to do so at least until the UK negotiates its exit from the EU. The UK has adopted the Sustainable Use Directive in its National Action Plan. In that context, in the immediate term, it is business as usual. The UK has been a leader in promoting and adopting best practice and the Amenity Forum, acting on behalf of the sector, is ready to actively engage with UK government in the period ahead as our exit is achieved. Over the coming months, we will seek to keep all involved informed of developments and this will be very much an area of debate and discussion at our national conference being held on October 13th.

Change does provide real opportunity for the sector to influence new approaches and to be fully engaged in seeking out solutions to existing problems. Weed, pest and disease control is both important and essential. It ensures our trains keep running, our parks and pavements are safe, our sports fields are fit for purpose, our transport networks remain operational, our environment is sustainable and so much more. A key campaign led by the Amenity Forum is focused on this and seeking to increase awareness of the public and all involved. We should be proud of what we do at whatever level. The quality of UK sports surfaces is well known and respected across the world. We need to step up our voice and present this with pride. Weed, pest and disease control is not a nice to have but is both important and essential.

Notes to Editors

The Amenity Forum is non-profit making and 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, Kate Hopkins, or the Chairman, Professor John Moverley OBE. Similarly if you wish to register for future press releases, please let us know.

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