

HorticultureWeek

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Trade fair set to move to Birmingham NEC from next year to link with Institute of Groundsmanship conference and awards

IOG Saltex reveals plan to move indoors

By Sarah Gosgrove



News that IOG Saltex will move to Birmingham NEC from next year has been welcomed by turf experts but some have questioned the scheduling for 2015.

The 76 year old trade fair will move to a two day slot at the NEC on 4-5 November 2015 and link to the Institute of Groundsmanship annual conference and awards. There will be no outdoor element. The NEC is expected to be three times more expensive per square metre but cheaper in other costs.

Event Director Jon Gibson of Brintex Events said extensive market research including 1,200 exhibitors and visitor surveys revealed that most Saltex attendees said September was too busy a time for them, while a central location was favourable.

"For a majority of exhibitors viewing Saltex as their main event of the year and spending up to 80 per cent of their marketing budget on taking part, the weather related risk of not getting a good return was too great."

Only 10 exhibitors did "true demonstrations" last year.

Dennis and SISIS Managing Director Ian Howard, exhibiting at the show for a 28th year, said it cost his company £1 a second to show in Windsor and he expects overall NEC costs to compare. "It will be good for us. Our customers are schools, local authorities and

sports clubs and currently it's the worst time of year for their busy schedules. Visitor numbers have gone down and the market has changed totally".

Lloyds of Letchworth Managing Director Clive Nottingham said he is "delighted with the move", while Campey Turf Care Systems Managing Director Richard Campey called it "brilliant news for the industry" and said his company will return in 2015 after previously dropping the show.

However, there is concern that the move to the NEC on November 2015 will mean that it will be too similar and too close to the BTME show held in Harrogate in January.

Turf Marketer Ellie Parry said if both remain annual events it will "place an unreasonable burden on trade exhibitors still dealing with the effects of a recession".

DJ Turfcare owner David Jenkins assed: "The trade already has an indoor show. I wonder if their aim is to undermine BIGGA by getting in first."

British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association Chief Executive Officer Jim Croxon pointed out that there was previously not much overlap between the shows but exhibitors and visitors now give more consideration to which they will attend.

**JKC are looking forward
to attending Saltex at
the NEC in November
2015**

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