

Dealing with storm damage

- Consider if you have the appropriate risk assessments in place for any clean-up operations.
- Once you are satisfied your site is safely accessible carry out an inspection of the ground and facilities.
- If you believe damage has occurred to insured items do not begin any clean-up operation until you have contacted your insurance company for advice.
- Check all goals, sockets and ball stop fencing paying particular attention to any welds and brackets as they may have been damaged during the storm.

Dealing with debris

- Inspect the playing areas for any large debris and where possible remove using a wheelbarrow and hand tools.
- Only once the pitches have adequately dried should you consider use of machinery (a basic rule of thumb is that if any water is drawn up under foot or by machinery it is not fit).
- A tractor mounted sweeper and collector sometimes known as a Litamisa can be used to remove smaller debris from a large area, a ride on rotary mower with collection bag will have a similar effect but damage may occur to blades if the debris is too large or dense.
- On smaller areas consider use of a pedestrian rotary mower or a pedestrian scarifier with a brushing cassette that will act as a sweep.

Dealing with standing water

- Allow the waterlogged areas to adequately dry out, attempting to remove standing water is likely to seal the surface and even pedestrian traffic will cause compaction exacerbating the problem.
- Once any standing water has cleared, on localised areas consider using a spring rake or brush to stand the grass back up or remove any dead vegetation if the area has been waterlogged for an extended period.
- Hand forking along with little and regular applications of a compatible sport sand brushed into the holes will help to dry the surface and create channels for water to permeate into the soil.
- Use of machines known as Robin Diggers can be very effective at relieving water-logging issues in small areas. With a typical working depth of 500mm they work by inserting a probe into the soil and injecting compressed air into the ground, this creates fissures in the soil structure and helps improve drainage. They are a small item of equipment and are a good option when the pitches are still too saturated to use tractor mounted equipment.
- Only when ground conditions are appropriate (see above) should any use of aeration or de-compaction equipment be considered. Slitters and deep spikers can seal the sides of the soil profile preventing water penetration if they are used when the ground is too saturated imagine rubbing your finger along wet Plasticine the principle is similar here.
- Prevention is always better than cure where improving drainage is concerned try and work with the weather forecast to carry out preventative work on areas that you know cause issues during periods of wet weather.