

## PRESS RELEASE

### Synthetic turf pitches in Scotland show the way for English Clubs

**There is growing pressure from English Football League Clubs to allow the installation of artificial turf. As the GreenFields artificial turf pitch at Scottish based Stenhousemuir receives its 6<sup>th</sup> annual FIFA 2 Star certification, clubs in the English Football League are starting to realise the long term, sustainable benefits an artificial turf pitch could bring to their clubs.**

In the 1980's clubs like Queens Park Rangers, Luton Town and Oldham Athletic installed the first generation pitches. However their use was stopped in professional league games. Skip forward 20 years and the restriction in the professional league games is still in place yet turf technology has moved on two generations in leaps and bounds. Modern artificial turf pitches are completely different products, tried, tested and approved by football's world governing body, FIFA.

#### **The Scottish experience**

A number of English Football League Clubs have seen the long term sustainability of artificial turf pitches in Scotland and the huge financial and community benefits that they bring. Unsurprisingly, they are now asking for the rules on artificial turf to be relaxed in England. With a global system of certification introduced by FIFA and countless medical studies showing that artificial turf is at least as safe as a standard grass pitch, there seem very few reasons to keep the ban in place.

#### **Year round**

Artificial turf provides the chance to generate a steady, year round revenue stream, not dependent on the weather or the on-pitch performance of the club. As well as generating revenue, it has been shown to reduce pitch maintenance costs by up to 75%, making the economics of installing an artificial turf pitch commercially attractive. Experience in Scotland's football league clubs using artificial turf has shown that its introduction can also bring a club much closer to the community. By letting up to 1,000 people a week use the pitch, this has helped stimulate the club's matchday ticket and merchandise sales and develop an entire new cohort of fans.

David Reid, club chairmain of Stenhousemuir comments: "Our pitch has been re-tested and has passed a 6th successive FIFA Recommended 2 Star standard. The installation has been a massive boost to our club, both from a quality facility perspective as well as revenue generation".

#### **Time for a change**

Football League Clubs are rumoured to be raising this matter again in February 2012. With the possibility of a vote in favour of artificial turf at the AGM in June, there is now a real chance that some clubs will be playing on an artificial football pitch in the 2012/13 season. With the opportunity to generate additional revenue, realise cost savings and boost community engagement, relaxing the rules on artificial turf in professional league games seems like the most sensible and practical decision.

**GreenFields, Stenhousemuir, Scotland  
Thursday 15 December 2011**

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## Notes to the editor

GreenFields offers a **free whitepaper**, "Football Turf - 25% Return on Investment" upon request. Please send an email with your request to [turf@greenfields.eu](mailto:turf@greenfields.eu).

**Digital pictures** are on request available via [marketing@greenfields.eu](mailto:marketing@greenfields.eu)

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**GreenFields**, with its headquarter in Genemuiden, the Netherlands, is a top global player within the industry of synthetic turf and a specialist in development, production, supply, installation and maintenance of synthetic turf systems. Diversity through development is one of the core strengths of GreenFields, with sales partners in over 100 countries including manufacturing in The Netherlands, South Africa, Korea, Algeria and United Arab Emirates and strong alliances with manufacturers in Australia, Russia, North and South America. GreenFields is a part of TenCate.

As one of the first producers in the synthetic turf industry, GreenFields has been awarded the FIFA and the IRB Preferred Producer status. Being a Preferred Producer for both Governing Bodies acknowledges the sustained efforts of GreenFields to offer the game and the players the best playing conditions worldwide.

Partnering with legendary materials manufacturer **TenCate Grass**, GreenFields is positioned for continued success. TenCate Grass develops and produces synthetic turf components and designs systems for top-flight sport, recreation and landscape applications. Together with its partners, TenCate Grass strives to achieve a system approach. This gives users confidence in playing characteristics and lifespan. TenCate Grass has production facilities in Europe, the Middle East and North America.