

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Grounds Maintenance - Service Specification.

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy & Growth) –
9th February 2016
Cabinet – 17th March 2016

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Robin Carter – Executive Councillor for
Operations & the Environment

Report by: Alistair Merrick – Interim Head of Service (Operations)

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

1. The report provides the opportunity for the Panel to scrutinise the draft Grounds Maintenance Service Specification before it is submitted to the Cabinet for endorsement.
2. The Service Specification that has been developed to better direct the grounds maintenance activities delivered by the Operations Service and to make maintenance frequencies and standards more transparent for residents. The service availability details and maintenance frequencies will form the core information on the Council's Website regarding the grounds maintenance service provided by the Council.
3. Along with waste and recycling collections and the street cleansing service, the grounds maintenance service is one of the most visible services delivered by the Council and impacts directly on residents and businesses in the District in terms of their sense of well-being in respect to Huntingdonshire.
4. The scope of the grounds maintenance service provided by the Council is as follows:
 - Grass Maintenance.
 - Amenity Shrub Beds (Inc. Herbaceous & Rose Beds).
 - Pruning of Roses.
 - Seasonal Bedding Displays.
 - Preparation & Maintenance of Hanging Baskets.
 - Formal and Informal Hedge Maintenance.
 - Maintenance of Dykes, Ditches & Watercourses.
 - Minor Tree Works.
5. The core hours for the delivery of the service going forward are set out in Table 1 of the report and this constitutes the guarantee to the residents of when the service will be available.

6. Active independent monitoring of the grounds maintenance service is being introduced which is done to a prescribed format and the results measured against the annual performance targets set for the service. It is this auditing that will test if the frequencies are correct and it is highly likely some will be amended, with both increases and decreases in maintenance frequencies.
7. When endorsed the service availability detail and the maintenance frequencies will be published on the Council's website so that residents have immediate access to the core information regarding the grounds maintenance service provided by the Council.

Recommendation(s):

1. Overview and Scrutiny Panel are invited to make comments that will be included in the report to Cabinet seeking the endorsement of the Grounds Maintenance Service Specification and also help with the finalisation of the service specification.
2. The Cabinet are recommended to approve the Grounds Maintenance Service Specification as the primary document to direct the future delivery of the service. The Service Specification will be subject to review and refinement based on performance monitoring results and customer satisfaction findings.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The report provides the Panel with the opportunity to scrutinise the Grounds Maintenance Service Specification before it is adopted.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Grounds Maintenance Service Specification has been developed to better direct the grounds maintenance activities delivered by the Operations Service and to make maintenance frequencies and standards more transparent for residents. The service availability details and maintenance frequencies will form the core information on the Council's website regarding the grounds maintenance service provided by the Council.

- 2.2 Along with waste and recycling collections and the street cleansing service, the Grounds Maintenance Service is one of the most visible services delivered by the Council and impacts directly on residents and businesses in the District in terms of their sense of well-being in respect to Huntingdonshire. Consequently it is important that the service is well directed against clear performance requirements and that residents can access core information regarding when the service is provided, the maintenance regimes and performance standards.

- 2.3 The scope of the grounds maintenance service provided by the Council is detailed below:

- Grass Maintenance.
- Amenity Shrub Beds (Inc. Herbaceous & Rose Beds).
- Pruning of Roses.
- Seasonal Bedding Displays.
- Preparation & Maintenance of Hanging Baskets.
- Formal and Informal Hedge Maintenance.
- Maintenance of Dykes, Ditches & Watercourses.
- Minor Tree Works.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Following a full review of the current service it was confirmed that the service had been operating outside of an adopted service specification consequently the Grounds Maintenance Service Specification attached as Appendix 1 to this report has been developed. The review work has included evaluation of all the current maintenance regimes against best industry practice, quantified areas to be maintained and market rates for work. Previously this core information has not been available and it is essential to enable effective and efficient deployment of resources.

- 3.2 The outcome of the review work is that it is recommended that the service is delivered against the annual programme of work and frequencies detailed in Table 1 below.

- 3.3 Active independent performance monitoring of the grounds maintenance service is being introduced. This will be done to a prescribed format and the results will be benchmarked against annually set targets. It is this auditing that will test if the frequencies are correct and it is highly likely some will be amended, with both increases and decreases in maintenance frequencies.

- 3.4 When endorsed the service availability detail and the maintenance frequencies will be published on the Council's website so that residents have immediate access to the core information regarding the grounds maintenance service provided by the Council.

Table 1: Proposed Annual Working Patterns and Frequencies of Work

		TYPICAL WORKING PATTERNS SUMMER WORKING HOURS - 7.00 - 16.30 WINTER WORKING HOURS - 7.30 - 16.00												
Works Planner Guide	FREQUENCY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	
GRASS - AMENITY	x 8													Medium Cut Regime Approx 8 cuts - max length 100-150mm
GRASS - SPORTS AND PARKS	x 8													Short Grass Regime Approx 12 cuts - max length 50-75mm
LAWN AND HAND CUTTING	x 10													Short Grass Regime - Pedestrian Mowers Approx 12 Cuts - Max Length 50-75mm
PITCH MARKING	As Req	Marking as Required Through The Season						Marking as Required Through The Season						
FLAIL WORK - VERGES Etc.	x 1													Winter Reduction/Cutting Back
CLOSED CEMETERIES	x 8													Medium Cut Regime Approx 8 cuts - max length 100-150mm
RAMSEY CEMETERY	x 8													Medium Cut Regime Approx 8 cuts - max length 100-150mm
WATERCOURSE INSPECTIONS	WEEKLY & FORTNIGHTLY	APRIL - OCTOBER FORTNIGHTLY VISITS ----- NOVEMBER - MARCH WEEKLY VISITS												
WATER COURSES	x 1													Winter Cutting Back and Clearing
HEDGE CUTTING	x 2													Summer Trim as Required
SHRUB/ROSE BED PRUNING	X 2	Winter Prune Back Period												Trim
SHRUB/ROSE BED MAINTENANCE	X 12	On going maintenace as required to maintain - no greater than 15-20% weed growth evident in bed area												
BEDDING SEASONAL	X 2													Summer Bedding Planting
WATERING SERVICES	3 X P/Wk													Winter Bedding Planting
PITCH WORKS (REPAIRS)	X 1													Summer Bedding Watering Service 3 x Per Week
FENCING PAINTING	As Req													Off Season Reapirs as Required
LEAF CLEARANCE														Winter Maintenance Service as Required
HDC SERVICE MONITORING	Ongoing													Leaf Clearance in Coloabouration With Street Cleansing
		On-going Monitoring on a Rolling Percentage Basis of the Regions												

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

- 4.1 Comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) from the meeting on 9th February 2016 are attached as Appendix 2.

5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS AND HOW THESE WILL BE ADDRESSED

- 5.1 The Grounds Maintenance Service Specification will bring a new direction for the service and ensure the arrangements for the delivery of the service are transparent for residents and performance can be benchmarked going forward. This will enable the Council to evidence it is delivering a value for money service which cannot be done at present.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 The resources within the Grounds Maintenance Team that deliver the services across the District are already being realigned against the proposed maintenance frequencies and standards. Consequently after endorsement by the Cabinet of the Grounds Maintenance Service Specification the service can be immediately delivered against the specification. The performance monitoring regime is being developed in parallel and will be fully operational by April 2016.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 The policy will contribute to the Corporate Plan as follows:
- a) Enhancing fundamentally the built and green environment of the District.
 - b) Operations becoming much more business-like and efficient in the way it delivers safe services.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The service improvement plan adopted by the Operations Service includes a structure of on-going consultation with residents and service users, these will be used to test the appropriateness of the maintenance regimes from the users' perspective. The performance monitoring results will also be published to evidence to residents that specified service standards are being delivered.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Grounds Maintenance Service Specification has been drafted to fully comply with all relevant legislation.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Grounds Maintenance Service Specification has been developed within existing resources. The implementation of the service specification will be within the existing resources of the Operations Service deployed on grounds maintenance activities.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Grounds Maintenance Service Specification seeks to ensure the delivery of an appropriate and equitable balance in the provision of the service across the District.

12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 12.1 The scrutinising of the Grounds Maintenance Service Specification gives the Panel the opportunity to influence the final document submitted to the Cabinet for endorsement.
- 12.2 To provide clear direction and performance standards through the service specification for the future delivery of the service.

13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- 13.1 Appendix 1: the Ground Maintenance Service Specification.
- 13.2 Appendix 2: comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) from the meeting on 9th February 2016.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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SERVICE SPECIFICATION FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Version	Date Issued	Review
Version 1	14 January 2016 (AM)	19 January 2016 (TB)
Version 2	26 January 2016 (AM)	26 January 2016 (JS)
Version 3		
Version 4		
Version 5		

The grounds maintenance services provided by Huntingdonshire District Council (Street Scene Services) shall include:

- Grass Maintenance.
- Amenity Shrub Beds (Inc. Herbaceous & Rose Beds).
- Pruning of Roses.
- Seasonal Bedding Displays.
- Preparation & Maintenance of Hanging Baskets.
- Formal and Informal Hedge Maintenance.
- Maintenance of Dykes, Ditches & Watercourses.
- Minor Tree Works.

1.0 Definitions

1.1 For the purpose of this specification, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

Term	Meaning
<i>The Service</i>	The Grounds Maintenance Team within Street Scene Services.
<i>The Area Manager</i>	The day to day operational manager(s) responsible for the delivery of the grounds maintenance service against this specification.
<i>Grass Cutting Season</i>	31 March to 31 October each year
<i>Fly Tipping</i>	Where the term ' fly tipping' or 'fly tip' is used it means any deposit or accumulation of earth , debris, rubbish, refuse, waste, furniture, equipment or any other thing abandoned or apparently abandoned by any person at any location, on or off the highway, without the approval or authority of the client

	<p>officer.</p> <p>(a) It includes refuse or waste stored in containers on a highway awaiting collection by any agency if they are not collected or removed within a reasonable period of the scheduled time.</p> <p>(b) It includes anything that the Council may remove under powers given in Section 6 of the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978.</p> <p>(c) It includes anything abandoned or apparently abandoned on, in or adjacent to a motor vehicle which the Authority may remove under powers given in Section 3 of the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978.</p> <p>(d) It includes anything specified by the Head of Service to be treated as a fly tip.</p>
<i>Grass Areas - General</i>	Defined as areas of grass that make up roadside verges, and green spaces within and around residential areas
<i>Grass Areas – Sports Pitches and Parks</i>	Defined as areas of grass that make up recreational sports areas and parklands
<i>Lawns & Hand Cut Grass Areas</i>	Defined as areas of grass that are either required to be box mown and/or areas where access for ride on machinery is limited.
<i>Autumn Leafing Period</i>	1 November to 31 December each year.
<i>Rose Pruning Period</i>	1 November to 31 December each year.
<i>Summer Bedding Display Period</i>	Prepared and planted during May, seasonal display through to end of September
<i>Winter Bedding Display Period</i>	Prepared and planted during October, seasonal display through to end of April
<i>Formal Hedges</i>	Defined as general hedging seen locally around the area
<i>Informal Hedges</i>	Those containing native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, etc. in natural settings. These hedgerows shall be treated in such a fashion as to encourage maximum wildlife habitation.
<i>Winter Hedge Maintenance Period</i>	1 November to 31 January each year.
<i>Summer Hedge Maintenance Period</i>	1 July to 31 July each year.
<i>Dykes, Streams and Ditches Maintenance Period</i>	1 October to 30 November each year.

2.0 Grass Maintenance

- 2.1 Grass maintenance will be carried out when soil conditions are suitable. The 'typical' grass cutting season will run from the end of March through to the end of October.
- 2.2 All grass areas shall be inspected prior to the commencement of any grass cutting, all litter, stones, branches and other debris that have the potential to cause personal injury or damage to machinery, equipment and installations shall be removed and disposed.
- Under no circumstances should litter or rubbish be shredded as a result of grass cutting operations.
 - All incidents of exceptional fly tipping and abandoned cars shall be reported to the Area Manager who will arrange their removal.
- 2.3 Some grass areas have naturalised bulbs, during the spring season, please avoid cutting these. Where bulbs appear, the immediate area around the bulbs shall not be cut for a minimum of six weeks after flowering has finished.
- 2.4 Once grass cutting has commenced on an area, it shall be completed without delay, this includes:
- All associated strimming activities, and
 - The blowing of arisings from roads and paths.
- 2.5 Grass areas must be cut back to the hedge lines, fence lines, dykes and/or any other boundary lines by the use of mowing machine or hand held strimmer at the time of the grass cutting operation. This will include cutting back nettles, brambles and herbage. The practice of allowing boundary lines to establish by the means of not cutting back to the boundary shall not be accepted at any time.
- 2.6 If inclement weather prevents the specified grass cutting being carried out or if carried out would create damage to the surface of grass areas, i.e. cause divots, ruts, puddling or scalping in dry or wet weather, operations shall cease and immediately the Area Manager shall be notified of this action.
- Strimmers shall be used with **caution** around trees to prevent damage occurring.
 - All young/ornamental trees within grassed areas shall be kept free of grass and weeds to a distance of 0.50m from tree base, to prevent close proximity strimmer activities.
- 2.7 The following standards shall be deemed to include the cutting of "bents" when applicable, with suitable equipment.
- Grassland and verge type areas to be cut with suitable tractor mounted or pedestrian operated flail or rotary equipment. The herbage height shall be cut to give a finished height between 75mm and 100mm and all arisings to remain on the ground.
 - Wildflower meadow grass areas are to be cut to no less than 100mm with suitable flail equipment, on one occasion per year in October the arisings from which shall be left on site for no less than 7 days and no more than 14 days then collected, and removed off site by composting/recycling.

Amenity Grass Cutting Standards

Category of Grass	Description	Mowing Standard	Tolerance Levels between Cuts
GRASS AREAS - GENERAL	MEDIUM GRASS	CUT TO 40-55MM	MAX HEIGHT 100-150MM
GRASS - SPORTS & PARKS	SHORT GRASS	CUT TO 25-40MM	MAX HEIGHT 50-75MM
LAWN & HANDCUTTING	SHORT GRASS	CUT TO 25-40MM	MAX HEIGHT 50-75MM

3.0 Amenity Shrub Beds (Inc. Herbaceous & Rose Beds)

3.1 The Operative shall visit and carry out routine maintenance to each of the shrub beds, which shall include:

- Weed control;
- Hoeing;
- Hand weeding;
- Shrub pruning; and
- Litter removal as outlined below.

3.2 Visits shall be on one occasion per month frequency.

3.3 Shrub bed areas shall be kept free of:

- Self-set tree seedlings;
- Tree suckers;
- Brambles;
- Briars;
- Elders; and
- Other rogue and unwanted vegetation and weed growth, (with no greater than 15% to 20% weed growth evident in bed areas).

3.4 Mulch, where applied to shrub beds shall be to a minimum depth of a 100mm.

3.5 Routine maintenance tasks shall include:

- The removal of dead flowers and stems from plants to promote a good floral display and maintain the beds in a neat and tidy condition.
- The re-staking, re-firming and re-tying of plants as necessary.
- The cutting down of all herbaceous stems at the appropriate time of year and thoroughly tidying the beds.

- The cutting/trimming back of plants overhanging surrounding grass areas to retain shape and extent of bed or border. At no time shall shrubs be boxed pruned.
 - When small to medium size trees are in beds and borders you shall include the removal of broken, dead and low branches along with basal growth and the replacement of stakes and adjustment of ties.
 - On each visit the bed shall be thoroughly weeded, all litter, rubbish, fly tipping, leaves and other debris removed off site.
 - Edging back using long handled shears all grass edges, where edges have been damaged or are not defined please reform and maintain a new edge using a half moon.
 - Suckers found around the base of rose bushes are to be removed at the point of attachment to the plant.
- 3.6 The varieties of roses, shrubs and plants growing in beds and borders shall be properly identified to enable them to be pruned correctly.
- 3.7 All plants shall be maintained substantially free of pest and disease by using cultural techniques where practicable.
- 3.8 Autumn leaf cover shall not exceed more than 15% of the beds area. Leaves shall be removed from the beds during November and December. The areas around beds and borders are to be left clean and tidy. All leaves and other arisings shall be collected and disposed by composting.
- 3.9 The shrubs must be kept so as to prevent them from becoming a hazard to passing pedestrians, vehicles, street name plates and direction signs. The shrubs must be prevented from becoming too tall or overgrown or producing a "Muffin Effect".
- 3.10 Ground cover shrubs must never be allowed to become leggy, but pruned to a dense even cover which discourages weed growth.

4.0 Pruning of Roses

- 4.1 The work shall be carried out using secateurs, long handled pruners, pruning saw and pruning knife as appropriate and shall generally be in accordance with Professor John Malins "The Essential Pruning Companion" ISBN 0 7153 9899 7 and the following requirements:
- Roses shall be lightly pruned during November or December to tidy the plant and prepare it for the winter period. This shall include removal of upper growth to reduce wind rock during winter gales, followed by a full prune during March.
 - Dead Heading of Roses - these operations shall be carried out on each maintenance visit to the rose beds.

4.2 Programme Variations: pruning shall not be undertaken in excessively cold or frosty conditions.

5.0 Seasonal Bedding

5.1 **General:** The Council maintains specific beds, borders, hanging baskets and containers, which are used for winter and summer floral displays.

5.2 **Designs:** Winter and summer bedding displays shall be marked out, planted and maintained.

5.3 **Clearance and Preparation:** On completion of the bedding displays the Operative shall carry out the following operations:

- Remove all old plants, unless otherwise agreed no bed shall be stripped of plants in excess of seven working days. Remove old plants, bulbs and weeds, taking care not to break the stem of any tulip bulbs, so as to remove the bulb completely. Where plants have been identified by your Area Manager for saving, these will be lifted carefully and then transported to our yard.
- Apply well-rotted farm yard manure to a depth of 100mm over the entire surface area of the bed.
- Single dig each bed using a spade to a depth of 250mm to 300mm incorporating all the farm yard manure. On completion of the hand digging a rotovator may be used to break down the soil to a finer tilth if needed.
- The beds will then be trod down and raked to form a true level, uniform and fine surface free from lumps.
- Using the edge of the spade form back the edges of the bed by pushing back the soil to give an angle of 45 degrees, so that the finished level of the bed is slightly above the surrounding grass area, after which a final raking over to give a finished level surface ready for planting.

6.0 Planting of Seasonal Bedding

6.1 In accordance with the plans supplied by the Development Team of Environmental Services, mark out and plant up at the appropriate planting distances the plants.

- All plants must be thoroughly watered within 4 hours of planting; under no circumstances should dry root balled plants be planted.
- Plants of the same species must be evenly spaced and planted to the depth appropriate to the species.
- Planting holes should be large enough to accommodate the root ball without restriction, where possible the please avoid treading on newly planted areas, for example working from back to front on a square or rectangular bed and from the centre on a circular or oval bed.
- Firm in the plants by hand avoiding excessive soil compaction but ensuring good contact between the roots and soil.
- If the planting plan includes standard and dot plants these need to be staked unless otherwise specified by your Area Manager.
- To ensure the plants do not wilt watering of the plants in each bed shall commence within 1 hour of planting.
- All grass areas surrounding the beds must be adequately protected and on completion the grass areas should be raked and left in a clean and tidy condition.

7.0 Irrigation & Maintenance of Seasonal Planting

7.1 The irrigation of beds shall be required both as part of routine maintenance and as part of the bedding out operation. Full irrigation of newly planted bedding shall commence as soon as plants have been planted.

- 7.2 Summer bedding displays require visits 3 times per week to water and maintain. The rate of application shall be no less than twenty litres for every square metre of bed area.
- 7.3 A soluble fertilizer shall be supplied which can be incorporated into the summer irrigation programme.
- 7.4 Where possible irrigation shall be avoided during the midday sun, so as to avoid potential scorching of bedding plants.
- 7.5 Maintenance will include the following:
- On each watering visit please clear all beds of weeds by hand, hoe or fork as required before applying the water.
 - Remove all dead flower heads and rogue plants, including rogue spring bulbs throughout the year.
 - Please stake, re-stake and re-firm plants as necessary including any plants pulled out of the beds through vandalism.
 - Thoroughly water the bedding with the require amount of water for each site.
 - During November and December where fallen leaves have covered the Winter bedding displays, please remove these carefully, at no time shall beds have an autumn leaf cover exceeding more than 5% of the bed area at any time.

8.0 Hanging Baskets

- 8.1 They shall include conventional hanging baskets and some up-the-pole style back-to-back baskets. During October each year remove the conventional hanging baskets and also remove the inner liners from the up-the-pole back-to-back baskets, and return them to Eastfield House, where the plants and compost shall be removed and composted. The baskets shall then be carefully cleaned and washed inside and out to be stored at Eastfield House under the stairs.
- 8.2 During early March each year the Service shall check all brackets and supports for the conventional hanging baskets and also the up-the-pole baskets supports, reporting any damage or failure to your Area Manager, with full information on the condition.
- 8.3 During late May or early June each year the Service shall collect all hanging baskets from the Council nursery to deliver, hang and secure the baskets at the locations identified by the Area Manager, as soon as the baskets are put in place and secured, please carry out a full watering to ensure that the compost and plants has received sufficient water, and that all the baskets continue to be fully watered.

9. Formal Hedge Maintenance

- 9.1 Hedges shall be cut and maintained at a height and width suitable for their location. Cutting, pruning or trimming shall take place to the point of the previous year's cut to even straight lines or flowing contours with the ground, and as agreed with the Area

Manager. No hedges shall be cut between March and June inclusively unless otherwise agreed with the Area Manager. No hedges shall be reduced beyond previous year's height or width without the prior agreement of the Area Manager.

- 9.2 Where hedges are found to house nesting birds Operatives shall cease cutting the hedge in the immediate vicinity of the nest and inform the Area Manager that the work had to stop. Once the young birds have flown, Operatives shall return and the hedge and cut to the same standard as the surrounding hedge.
- 9.3 Formal hedge maintenance includes;
- Hedges shall be pruned on one occasion during November through January and on one occasion during July.
 - All species shall be pruned in accordance with recognised horticultural.
 - Where a hedgerow contains several species, the treatment and pruning times shall reflect that of the faster growing dominant species.
 - Where trees (not tree seedlings) are within a hedge please trim around the tree by the use of hand tools so as not damage the tree in any way. Trimming of the tree branches shall be carried out so as not to damage or change the shape and form of the tree.
 - Retain regular line and shape, with the top width being less than the base.
 - Retain site lines and visibility splays for highway purposes.
 - Removal of overhanging growth from footways, carriageways, street signs and low level bollard type street lights at all times.
- 9.4 All hedges shall have measurements specified on the plans please ensure that you adhere to these pruning sizes.
- 9.5 All litter, debris and vegetation including self-set trees, shrubs such as elders, sycamores and ash, tree suckers, brambles, briars and all other forms of disfiguring invasive vegetative growth shall be completely removed from the hedge. To avoid any re-growth from the base of all hedges all arisings to be collected and either chipped or disposed of.
- 9.6 Any re-growth of invasive vegetation such as Blackberries and Nettles etc., and other growths growing from formal hedges shall be cut back as and when necessary or when requested by your Area Manager.
- 9.7 Operatives shall use equipment suitable for the standard of hedge, the species composition and in accordance with the correct horticultural practice.
- **Mechanical Trim:** Manual and hand held equipment for ornamental hedges.
 - **Hand Prune:** Manual hand held equipment, i.e. secateurs for laurel etc., and shears for prestige hedges.
- 9.8 All surfaces, gullies and ditches on which hedge clippings fall shall be cleared and all loose cuttings lodged in hedges removed.
- 9.10 These operations must be completed by the end of each working day so that the site is left clean and tidy.

10.0 Informal Hedge Maintenance

- 10.1 Informal hedges are those containing native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, etc. in natural settings. These hedgerows shall be treated in such a fashion as to encourage maximum wildlife habitation.
- 10.2 Pruning shall be carried out once annually during the months of November through January. All litter, debris and vegetation including self-set trees, shrubs such as elders, sycamores and ash, tree suckers, brambles, briars and all other forms of disfiguring invasive vegetative growth shall be completely removed from the hedge, to avoid any re-growth from the base of all hedges and all arisings disposed of.
- 10.3 All hedges shall be cut to:
- Retain regular line and shape, with the top width being less than the base.
 - Retain site lines and visibility splays for highway purposes.
 - Remove overhanging growth from footways and carriageways at all times.
 - At all times remove vegetation from blocking street signs, and low bollard type streetlights etc.
 - All litter, debris and vegetation shall be removed from the base and within all hedges to one metre width both sides and all arisings disposed of.

11.0 Dykes, Ditches, Streams and Watercourses

- 11.1 All natural/informal ponds identified in the plans, including their surrounds shall be maintained in a safe condition at all times. The Service shall ensure the quality and the flow of water is suitable for the purpose for which the facility is intended.
- 11.2 Carry out maintenance at the same time as the inspection on a fortnightly basis during the summer months and weekly during the winter months, providing a signed check sheet to the Area Manager.
- 11.3 Routine maintenance shall include the following:
- Carrying out minor repairs to fences and gates.
 - Clearance of inlet and outlet pipes, drains, ditch base, banks and gulleys.
 - Clearing and disposal of litter from within the watercourse and around the water feature, including banks.
 - Removal of incidents of fly tipping. The Operative shall report all major incidents of flytipping and abandoned cars to the Area Manager who will arrange their removal.
 - All grass areas within the fenced area of any water feature will be maintained as Wildflower Meadow.

- 11.4 The banks and base of dykes, streams and ditches shall be cut and cleared annually in October/November of vegetation to ensure the free flow of water, any vegetative material that is removed, shall be left on the bank for 48 hours to allow wildlife to return to their natural habitat, after which it should be cleared from site.
- 11.5 As part of this operation the ditch or stream banks will include clearance up to the top area of the slope which adjoins the open space where for example Amenity Grass cutting is undertaken.

12.0 Minor Tree Works

- 12.1 All work shall be carried out to British Standard 3998:1989 Recommendations for Tree Works and as agreed with the Area Manager. Most tree works will be carried out by the Arboriculture Team but some minor works can be done immediately if needed.
- 12.2 Young Trees, these include newly planted trees and those less than 5 years since planting.
- 12.3 All young/ornamental trees within grassed areas shall be kept free of grass and weeds to a distance of 0.50m from tree base to prevent close proximity strimmer activities.
- 12.4 Strimmers are to be used with **caution** around trees to prevent damage occurring.
- 12.5 All trees with supports shall be checked monthly to ensure correct tension of tree ties and that they are adjusted or replaced as necessary. Tree stakes shall be replaced as necessary; those no longer required shall be removed.
- 12.6 Pruning shall consist of the removal of damaged and diseased wood, crossing branches and minor formative pruning to encourage a well-formed balanced crown with a central leading shoot. The base of trees shall be kept free of basal and epicormic growth.
- 12.7 Vandalised trees shall be repaired or removed immediately complete with stakes and ties with holes made safe and the Area Manager informed.

TYPICAL WORKING PATTERNS
 SUMMER WORKING HOURS - 7.00 - 16.30
 WINTER WORKING HOURS - 7.30 - 16.00

Works Planner Guide	FREQUENCY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	
GRASS - AMENITY	x 8				Medium Cut Regime Approx 8 cuts - max length 100-150mm									
GRASS - SPORTS AND PARKS	x 8				Short Grass Regime Approx 12 cuts - max length 50-75mm									
LAWN AND HAND CUTTING	x 10			Short Grass Regime - Pedestrian Mowers Approx 12 Cuts - Max Length 50-75mm										
PITCH MARKING	As Req	Marking as Required Through The Season						Marking as Required Through The Season						
FLAIL WORK - VERGES Etc.	x 1										Winter Reduction/Cutting Back			
CLOSED CEMETERIES	x 8				Medium Cut Regime Approx 8 cuts - max length 100-150mm									
RAMSEY CEMETERY	x 8				Medium Cut Regime Approx 8 cuts - max length 100-150mm									
WATERCOURSE INSPECTIONS	WEEKLY & FORTNIGHTLY	APRIL - OCTOBER FORTNIGHTLY VISITS ----- NOVEMBER - MARCH WEEKLY VISITS												
WATER COURSES	x 1										Winter Cutting Back and Clearing			
HEDGE CUTTING	x 2							Summer Trim as Required			Winter trim/Reductions			
SHRUB/ROSE BED PRUNING	X 2	Winter Prune Back Period							Trim				Winter Prune Back	
SHRUB/ROSE BED MAINTENANCE	X 12	On going maintenace as required to maintain - no greater than 15-20% weed growth evident in bed area												
BEDDING SEASONAL	X 2					Summer Bedding Planting						Winter Bedding Planting		
WATERING SERVICES	3 X P/Wk						Summer Bedding Watering Service 3 x Per Week							
PITCH WORKS (REPAIRS)	X 1					Off Season Reapirs as Required								
FENCING PAINTING	As Req										Winter Maintenance Service as Required			
LEAF CLEARANCE												Leaf Clearance in Coloabouration With Street Cleansing		
HDC SERVICE MONITORING	Ongoing	On-going Monitoring on a Rolling Percentage Basis of the Regions												