



**Thatcham Town Council  
Grounds Maintenance Contract  
2017 - 2020**

**Specification for Scheduled work**

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# 1 General Description of the Service

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## 1.1 Overview

This Specification relates to the maintenance of grounds which are the responsibility of Thatcham Town Council.

The principal areas requiring maintenance comprise:

- A multitude of public open space sites which are mainly grassed and are scattered throughout Thatcham, please see site specifications for location maps.
- Grounds maintenance at a variety of other Council owned properties.

A profile of each site is detailed in the Appendices which list the work required at each site, the relevant area and the frequency or performance specification involved. The Contractor must accept all sites in their present condition. No other claim for extra costs on account of site condition will be countenanced at any time.

## 1.2 Scheduled Work

This Specification, together with the Appendices refer to the Scheduled Works which form part of the Contract. The Specification for Scheduled Work requires grounds maintenance works to be undertaken by the Contractor including:-

- maintenance of grassed areas on a variety of Council sites including open spaces and play areas
- maintenance of shrub beds, hedges and young trees
- leaf and debris removal and disposal at the frequencies specified. It will be the Contractor's responsibility to dispose of at a licensed waste disposal site
- cleansing of hard surfaces and herbicide treatment of weeds on hard surfaces
- The work required by the Contract is mainly of a routine and frequency based nature. However some tasks require the Contractor to undertake routine maintenance to achieve prescribed performance standards and the Contractor must determine the resources and frequencies of works necessary to achieve these specified standards.

## 1.3 Unscheduled Work

Specifications for Unscheduled Work follow the Specification for Scheduled Work. Schedules of Rates for Unscheduled Work which the Contractor may be required to undertake as required by the Supervising Officer follow the Bills of Quantities. No guarantee can be given to the particular level of additional and unscheduled work which will be awarded.

In the event of an emergency, the Supervising Officer may at his absolute discretion suspend the Service in whole or in part and require the Contractor's resources to be otherwise employed in the provision of the Service to be utilised in the provision of emergency services as directed by the Supervising Officer. The Contractor will comply with such direction.

The Supervising Officer shall have an absolute discretion as to what constitutes an emergency and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, "emergency services" will include activities commensurate with dealing with adverse weather conditions, e.g. storm damage clearance, dangerous branch removal, snow clearing or flood prevention operations and any incident classified as a civil emergency. In the event of an emergency, the Supervising Officer may direct the Contractor to perform the emergency services. Verbal instructions indicating the location and nature of work will be issued by the Supervising Officer or persons nominated by him or by the Council's emergency duty officer acting on behalf of the Supervising Officer which will be confirmed in writing as soon as possible to the Contractor.

#### **1.4 Acquisition and Disposal of Sites**

From time to time the Council will acquire new sites that require regular grounds maintenance. The Supervising Officer will add these sites to the contract as scheduled work in accordance with the Specification. In respect of such sites or tasks on specific sites that are added to the Contract, the Contractor will carry out these works at the rates specified in the Bills of Quantities. Similarly, the Council will from time to time dispose of sites or remove particular tasks from specific sites from the Contract. The Council will deduct payment to the Contractor at the appropriate rate in the Bills of Quantities for work no longer required.

- Other than herbicides, the use of pesticides shall not be permitted in undertaking any of the works detailed in the Specification for Scheduled Works.
- Where the Contractor is required to transport to and dispose of any items at a licensed disposal site, the Contractor shall be responsible for any fees and charges payable at such site and shall include in his Tender for the same. At the evaluation of tender stage, the Council will take into consideration arrangements the Contractor may have in place to compost green waste.
- The Contractor will use peat free compost products with regard to the delivery of all services detailed in this Specification.

#### **1.5 Health and Safety**

The Contractor shall ensure that the Service is performed in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 having regard to the safety of the public and of his employees. The Contractor shall ensure that at all times there is a minimum of obstruction to pedestrians and traffic when the service is performed in parks, or highways or other public places.

#### **1.6 Vehicles and Plant**

The Specification shall be carried out by the Contractor with equipment suitable for the sites to be maintained. The Contractor shall provide and maintain all vehicles, plant machinery and equipment to ensure proper performance and completion of the Works. The Contractor shall ensure that all vehicles are licensed, taxed, insured and in a well maintained roadworthy condition during the progress of the Works. All machinery used on grassed areas shall be free from oil or fuel leaks. All hand machinery shall be maintained in such a way as to prevent the spillage of oil or fuel.

#### **1.7 Noise**

The Contractor shall comply with the general requirements of BS 5228 (2014) Code of Practice or as amended for noise control on construction and open sites. The Contractor shall ensure that in executing the services he and persons in his employment execute the work in such a manner that it does not constitute a nuisance to the road users or others. This clause does not absolve the Contractor of any obligations under any other legislation or code of practice.

## 1.8 **Hours for Working**

The Contractor will not be permitted to carry out any part of the Services during the hours of darkness without the prior consent of the Supervising Officer.

## 1.9 **Inclement Weather**

The Contractor shall proceed with all the Services in accordance with the Specification, bearing in mind climatic and seasonal requirements, and the needs of the Council. Work shall be suspended when inclement weather makes work impracticable. Unless the Supervising Officer so agrees in writing, any delay or suspension of operation caused by weather conditions shall not relieve the Contractor of any of his obligations under the Contract or entitle the Contractor to any additional payments.

The Contractor will not be deemed to have failed to perform the Services if suspension of the operations has been agreed in writing by the Supervising Officer.

## 1.10 **Complaints**

The Contractor will refer any complaints that he receives to the Supervising Officer within 24 hours. Any complaint passed on to the Contractor by the Supervising Officer shall receive a full written reply within 10 working days addressing the issues raised in the complaint.

## 1.11 **Method of Assessment of Maintenance Standards**

The Contractor shall supply the Supervising Officer by no later than 0930 on every Monday with his programme of work for that week. It will be the Contractor's responsibility to programme works in order to meet the specification including required completion times. The Contractor will meet the Supervising Officer on a monthly basis or more frequently if required by the Supervising Officer. At the monthly meeting a valuation of the contractor's progress will be discussed with specific reference to adherence to the terms of the specification. The value of work completed in accordance with the specification over the previous month will be detailed at the meeting. Work not completed to the satisfaction of the Supervising Officer will be deducted from the payment due calculated on the basis of the Bills of Quantities. An invoice will then be sent to the Supervising Officer for work carried out on all sites and this will be paid by the Council within 30 days.

## 1.12 **Out of Hours Contact Telephone Number**

The Contractor will supply the Supervising Officer with a mobile telephone number to be used by staff on duty at weekends or during evenings. The Supervising Officer may contact this number in order to instruct the Contractor to carry out any reported emergency work or in order to resolve any difficulties which may have arisen regarding scheduled work. The Supervising Officer will only normally order emergency work out of hours where there is a public safety issue. The out of hour's number will be connectable until 10pm.

## 2 Definitions

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The following expressions shall have the meaning hereby ascribed to them:

**“Arisings”** shall mean the accumulation of grass cuttings, hedge cuttings, leaves, weeds, root materials, branches, pruning, litter, path or bed edgings or other materials which arise from and are surplus or extraneous to any of the specified horticultural or maintenance work included in this Contract.

**“Boxed-off”** shall mean a particular high quality grass mowing operation using a cylinder mower with a minimum of 8 blades requiring the collection of grass clippings within the grass box of the mowing machine and the immediate removal from the cutting area of grass cuttings arising from the mowing of grass.

**“Cleanse” or “Cleansing” or**

**“Clean” or “Sweeping”** in relation to cleansing of paths and hard surfaces shall mean the following:-

- (i) the removal of all litter, debris, detritus, loose chippings, animal carcasses, animal fouling, accident debris, salt and grit arising from winter maintenance, oil, vomit, excreta, gum, other rubbish, leaf and fruit fall and blown vegetation, bud burst, blossom, deposits arising from fly tipping and any other material fouling the path or hard surface;
- (ii) the control and removal of unwanted vegetation and organic material howsoever caused or occurring;
- (iii) the transportation and disposal of all waste products arising from the provision of the services;
- (iv) emergency cleansing of areas as directed by the Supervising Officer pursuant to Section 6.

**“Daily”** shall mean each day of the year except Christmas Day.

**“Frequency Based”** shall mean any maintenance operation which is undertaken at frequencies specified in the Contract Documents

**“Hard Surface Areas”** shall mean tarmacadam, wetpour, concrete or other paved areas including roads, footpaths, car parks etc. but excluding areas surfaced in gravel, hogging, scalping's and the like.

**“Leaf Clearance” or “Clearance**

**of leaves” or “Leaf Clearance**

**Operation”**

shall mean searching for, removal and disposal of all fallen or wind blown leaves from the areas listed in the Appendices

**“Litter”**

shall mean debris, detritus animal carcasses, dog faeces and animal fouling, rubbish, salt and grit arising from winter maintenance, oil, vomit, gum, hypodermic syringes, needles and drug related material defined as clinical waste in accordance with the Control of Waste Regulations 1992; leaf and fruit fall and blown vegetation, bud burst, blossom, twigs and branches, deposits arising from fly tipping and other material howsoever caused or occurring. Large volumes of material that have been fly tipped will be removed by instruction and paid for as an additional payment.

**“Naturalised Bulb Area”**

shall mean those grass areas where bulbs have been planted for the purpose of naturalisation where special grass mowing operations are specified in Section 3.2.5 of the Specification.

**“Performance Based”**

shall mean any maintenance operation where the standard required is specified in the Contract Documents and the Contractor is required to judge the frequency of operations necessary to achieve the specified standards.

**“Pesticides”**

shall mean chemicals, compounds and/or any proprietary products produced for the control and/or eradication of weeds, pests, fungi, algae or moss and shall include all herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, acaricides, fumigants, lumbricides, algicides, molluscicides or moss killer.

**“Properly Licensed Disposal Site”**

shall mean any site properly licensed under Environmental Protection Act 1990 for the disposal of each particular type of waste arising from the works specified in this Contract which the Contractor is required to make arrangements and for which he pays any or all fees for the purpose of disposing of waste as required by this Specification.

**“Obstacles”**

shall mean seats, street lights, signs, manhole covers, trees, shrubs and any other obstruction within grassed areas. Obstacles shall also include edges of paths, wall and fence bases and other boundaries to grassed areas.

- “Scalping”** in relation to the maintenance of grassed areas shall mean the mowing of that area in a manner which results in the surface of the turf being removed or the grass cut so short as to be severely deteriorated.
- “Scarify”** shall mean to clear build-up of dead herbage and creeping stems in turf in order to leave an open surface in readiness for renewed growth.
- “Supervising Officer”** shall mean the designated officer of the Council namely the Services Manager. or any other officer duly authorised by him to act on behalf of the Council in relation to the Contract.
- “Tree Circle”** shall mean a small defined cultivated area within a grassed area containing one or more trees.
- “Trimming Grassed Edges”** the trimming of grassed edges using long handled shears to remove the grass fringe from shrubs, rose and flower beds.
- “Weed”** shall mean any unwanted vegetation as defined by the Supervising Officer.
- “Weed Free”** shall mean no more than 5% weed cover on a bed surface and no weed more than 50mm in height or spread at any particular time. No weeds to have reached seeding stage.
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## 3 Maintenance of Grassed Areas

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### 3.1 Grassed areas

The Contractor shall maintain all the grassed areas on sites listed in the appendices of this Specification and such additional areas as may be required. The appendices give details of site descriptions and profiles of sites to be maintained. Whether the requirement is for performance or frequency based grass maintenance is specified.

The plans are provided for illustrative purposes only and are not to be assumed to include information on every feature or task in the Specification.

The grass maintenance operations are divided into categories and coded A, B, D, G and H in this Specification. Each code of grass maintenance works requires the Contractor to undertake a particular combination of tasks to achieve the specified standards.

### 3.2 Grass cutting codes

The Contractor is required to undertake the work of maintenance of each code of grassed areas in accordance with the following requirements:

#### 3.2.1 Code A – Ornamental Boxed Performance Cut

The Contractor shall, using a pedestrian operated mower, mow and “box-off” all grassed areas classified as Code A as frequently as is necessary to ensure that the grass is maintained at all times between the maximum height of 30mm and minimum height of 15mm. On the same day as the mowing is undertaken the Contractor shall remove all arisings from the site in a manner and to a place agreed by the Supervising Officer.

#### 3.2.2 Code B – Performance Cut (25-60mm)

The Contractor shall, using mowing machine appropriate to the task, but not a flail cutting machine and taking into account Section 3.3, mow all grassed areas classified as Code B as frequently as is necessary to ensure that the grass is maintained at all times between the maximum height of 60mm and minimum height of 25mm. The Contractor shall allow grass clippings to fly and be distributed evenly over the grass area.

#### 3.2.3 Code D – Frequency Based Cut (10 cuts per annum)

The Contractor shall, using grass mowing machinery appropriate to the task and taking into account Section 3.3, mow all grassed areas classified as Code D **ten** times per year to a height of 30mm in accordance with the programme of works supplied by the Contractor and approved by the Supervising Officer. The Contractor shall allow grass clippings to fly and be distributed evenly over the grass area. The contractor will undertake the work specified between March and October inclusive unless otherwise instructed by the Supervising Officer. The start date of each cycle will be agreed in advance with the Supervising Officer.

### 3.2.4 **Code G – Summer Meadow**

The Contractor shall, using the mowing machinery appropriate to the task and taking into account Section 3.3, mow all areas classified as Code G of this Specification twice per year, once in April and once in August and shall, on each occasion mow the grass to the height of 100mm. The Contractor shall, when mowing the grass in April allow the grass clippings to fly and be distributed evenly over the grass area and when mowing the grass in August, collect arisings from the site in a manner and to a place agreed by the Supervising Officer on the same day as the mowing operation is undertaken on that site.

### 3.2.5 **Code H – Naturalised Bulb Area**

The Contractor shall, using the mowing machinery appropriate to the task and taking into account Section 3.3, mow all grassed areas classified as Code H of this Specification at the same time and to the same minimum and maximum heights specified for adjoining grass areas excepting that mowing on Naturalised Bulb Areas shall not commence until at least six weeks after flowering. The first mow after flowering shall be completed by the end of June. The Contractor shall collect all arisings from the site in a manner and to a place agreed by the Supervising Officer on the same day as the mowing operation is undertaken at that site.

Arisings from subsequent mowings shall be dealt with the same as arisings from adjacent grass areas.

## 3.3 **Required specifics**

In undertaking the maintenance of grassed areas Code A to D of the Specification, the Contractor shall:

- 3.3.1 Use machines or tools of a type which are appropriate to the task, the standard and height of finish specified, the size and location of the grassed area and the method of cutting required. Any wheeled grass cutting machinery must be fitted with low ground pressure grassland tyres unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Supervising Officer.
- 3.3.2 Prior to mowing, inspect areas to be mowed and remove from the site all stones over 30mm diameter, litter, dog faeces and any other debris which might cause damage to property, grass cutting machines and equipment and/or injury to persons.
- 3.3.3 Ensure that all cutting edges and implements on machines and equipment engaged in mowing operations are sharp and properly set, so as to provide a true and even cut at all times. Any damage caused from such lack of maintenance will be reported to the Supervising Officer and made good by the Contractor within 72 hours. The Contractor shall reinstate at his expense, in a period agreed and to the satisfaction of the Supervising Officer, any damage caused by the Contractor to the turf, surface or levels of the ground or divots created during grass mowing. The Contractor will make good at his own expense and in a period determined by the Supervising Officer any damage caused during grass mowing to any obstacles or Hard Surface Areas.
- 3.3.4 On areas where large or heavy grass cutting machinery is likely to cause damage to overhanging trees, shrubs, plants, obstructions and edges of grassed areas or where these machines are likely to produce an irregular and/or untidy finish, use smaller, lighter and where necessary, pedestrian machines to avoid any such damage. Low branches shall not be removed to allow the use of large machines under trees unless approved in writing by the Supervising Officer.

- 3.3.5 Mow grass up to the edges of paths, shrubs, trees, street furniture, buildings, fences, site boundaries and other obstacles on the same day as other grass on the site is cut. Cutting methods must be appropriate so as to avoid damage to trees. This hand trimming around obstructions will be completed **on the same day** as the main cut. The Contractor shall take account of the works necessary to achieve the specified standards, adjacent to and around these features in his rates in the Bill of Quantities.
- 3.3.6 Ensure that at the end of each grass mowing day all adjacent hard areas, paths, highways, play area safety surfaces, crossways and gutters are free of arisings.
- 3.3.7 The Contractor will complete the work on each cycle before moving onto the next.
- 3.3.8 The Contractor may not use herbicides for grass maintenance operations as a means of achieving the specified standards of maintenance of the grassed areas e.g. the use of chemicals for controlling growth of grassed areas including up to obstacles such as bollards or play equipment.
- 3.3.9 If, in the opinion of the Supervising Officer, the failure of a tree or shrub is due to damage caused by the Contractor's negligent grass mowing operations, the Contractor will replace such tree or shrub at his own expense with a plant of the same size and species within such period as is determined by the Supervising Officer and notified to the Contractor.
- 3.3.10 Trim grassed edges using long handled shears to remove the grass fringe from shrub, rose or flower beds on the same day as the grass mowing operation is performed on the site. When trimming the bed edges, maintain these edges and maintain the shape and size of the bed to the current shape without the trimming scalping the edge or encroaching into existing grass areas and enlarging the bed and shall leave all lines smooth and regular. The Contractor shall dispose of arisings in a manner agreed by the Supervising Officer.
- 3.3.11 In the case of frequency based maintenance works for grassed areas the mowing season shall normally be from the start of the third week in March until the end of the second week in October and the specified frequencies of mowing shall be undertaken within that period in accordance with the approved programme of works.

The Supervising Officer may however, at his discretion for one or more sites:

- (a) extend the mowing season beyond the dates referred to above;
  - (b) reduce the number of cuts below the number specified in the Specification for a particular code of grass;
  - (c) increase the number of cuts above the number specified in the Specification for a particular code of grass.
- 3.3.13 If, in the opinion of the Contractor and in agreement with the Supervising Officer, the condition of any site, sites or area of a site or sites is so wet that undertaking the mowing operation is likely to cause damage to the surface or turf thereof the Contractor shall defer the mowing operation until such time as ground conditions improve to the satisfaction of the Supervising Officer to an extent which will allow the mowing operation to be undertaken without risk of damage. When, after such circumstances the mowing is resumed the Contractor shall:-
- (a) in respect of performance based maintenance work, undertake whatever works are necessary to promptly bring the grassed area or areas to the standards as specified for the particular code of grass, as soon as is practicable;

In undertaking these works the Contractor shall use whatever type of machine is appropriate for the condition of the grass at the time of resumption of mowing and shall carry out however as many actions as are necessary to promptly achieve the specified standards of the Supervising Officer.

If, in the opinion of the Supervising Officer, the accumulation of arisings after cutting is likely to cause damage to the turf the Contractor shall collect and dispose of arisings from the site in a manner and to a place agreed by the Supervising Officer on the same day as the mowing operation is undertaken at that site.

The whole of these works shall be undertaken without additional payment.

- (b) In respect of frequency based works, complete the missed mowing operation, if practicable, by a date which is not less than five working days before the programme date for the next mowing operation on the site or sites in question. If the missed mowing operation cannot be completed within five working days of the next programme date then that operation shall be omitted from the programme and the mowing operation resumed on the next cut cycle. The Contractor shall, when the mowing operation is resumed, undertake whatever works are necessary and use whatever machinery is appropriate to achieve the specified standard by the programme completion date of that mowing operation.
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## 4 Hedge Maintenance

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- 4.1 The Contractor shall maintain all hedges on sites listed in the Appendices of this Specification and listed in the site profiles.

The hedge maintenance operations which the Contractor is required to undertake are divided into three categories and these are coded 'X', 'Y' and 'Z' in this Specification. The Appendices of this Specification also indicates the frequency of hedge maintenance required for each site in linear metres. Sides and tops of hedges are to be pruned where ever accessible.

The Contractor shall undertake the work of maintenance of each hedge code, the majority of which range from 1.5 metres to 5 metres in height, in accordance with the following requirements. All arisings will be collected and disposed of in a manner agreed with the Supervising Officer.

### 4.1.1 Code X – Formal Hedges

The Contractor shall once in May and once in August each year close trim the hedges, removing the current season's growth to form a neatly trimmed hedge. The Contractor, in trimming the hedge shall remove any alien or unwanted species growing in the hedge and shall taper the sides towards the top and, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Supervising Officer, maintain the previous height and width of the hedge. Laurel hedges shall be cut in accordance with Section 4.2.6 in July only. The Contractor will allow for this in his Rates. The contractor will check and avoid disturbing bird nests before starting work.

### 4.1.2 Code Y – Informal Hedges

The Contractor shall once per year in January cut the hedges to permit the growth of flower and fruit later in the year. The cut shall be made to remove the previous season's growth.

### 4.1.3 Code Z – Hedgerows

The Contractor shall once every three years in January cut the hedges listed in the Appendices to remove the growth since the last cut or to a line determined by the Supervising Officer. Normally one third of Code Z hedges will be cut in each year of the Contract. This will be agreed in December.

Other than code Z hedges, flails should not be used for this work.

- 4.2 The Contractor, in undertaking the works required to hedges codes X, Y & Z shall:

4.2.1 Where appropriate during hedge cutting comply with the current requirements of the Department of Transport "Safety at Street Works and Road Works – Code of Practice" and any amendment thereto. The Contractor will ensure that once he has started working along a given road section, that wherever possible he continues on that section until finished and where a break is unavoidable he shall return to restart no later than 1 working day thereafter. That wherever possible he continues on that section until finished and where a break is unavoidable he shall return to restart no later than 1 working day thereafter.

4.2.2 At all times during hedge cutting ensure that appropriate precautions are taken to protect and cause the minimum of disturbance to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

- 4.2.3 Establish a strong framework to the hedge with the appropriate shape and width in relation to the height of the hedge. He shall ensure that the width of hedge does not present a hazard or obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- 4.2.4 As part of the hedge maintenance operation, notify the Supervising Officer immediately upon becoming aware of any hedge requiring replacement or renovation with the reason.
- 4.2.5 All non-diseased arisings will be shredded, removed from the site and taken to a place agreed by the Supervising Officer. Any diseased material shall be delivered to and disposed of at a properly licensed disposal site on the same day as the diseased material is cut from the hedge. The site shall be left clean and tidy on completion of the work.
- 4.2.6 In respect of laurel hedges, all hedge maintenance shall be made using secateurs and shall only be cut once per annum in July. Beech hedges shall be cut using hand shears only and not mechanised trimmers.
- 4.2.7 Remove all weeds from the base of the hedge and any litter or debris. The removal of weeds from Code X and Code Y hedges shall be undertaken by hand and the use of herbicides will NOT be permitted. All arisings shall be delivered to and disposed of in a manner agreed with the Supervising Officer on the same day as the material is removed from the base of the hedge. The clearance of weeds from Code Z hedges is not required.
- 4.2.8 The Contractor will not be permitted the use of growth retardants on any of the hedges.
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## 5 Cleansing and Associated Activities

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The Contractor is required to undertake the following activities:

- (a) cleansing or herbicide treatment of paths and hard surfaces;
- (b) leaf clearance;

### 5.1 Cleansing of Paths and Hard Surfaces

5.1.1 The Contractor shall cleanse all the hard surfaced areas including roads, paths and car parks contained within the sites of this Specification on a monthly basis. The Contractor shall collect, transport to and dispose of the arisings from this operation at a properly licensed disposal site.

The cleansing operation will remove litter, weeds, debris and dirt, leaf litter fall, animal fouling, vomit, gum and grit from the hard surface. The method of cleansing shall ensure that sand or mortar joints between cobbles, slabs or bricks are not damaged or removed.

Any machinery used in this operation shall be of a type and weight such that it will not cause damage to the hard surfaced areas. The Contractor shall, prior to the use of any machinery for this operation, obtain the written approval to both the machinery and its method of use from the Supervising Officer.

5.1.2 The Contractor shall immediately notify the Supervising Officer and confirm in writing with the date and time of the inspection of any hard surfaced area on the sites listed in the Appendices of this Specification which are damaged and/or are unsafe irrespective of the cause of the condition.

5.1.3 The Contractor shall, if directed by the Supervising Officer in writing, cleanse all the hard surface areas at any site or sites additional to those listed in the Appendices of this Specification. Additional payment will be made of this.

### 5.2 Herbicide Treatment of Weeds on Hard Surfaces

The Contractor will make two applications of a non-residual herbicide to be approved by the Supervising Officer to hard surfaces areas identified in the Appendices per annum. One application will take place in April and one application will take place in August, as calm weather conditions allow.

### 5.3 Leaf Clearance

5.3.1 In the case of parks, the Contractor shall undertake the clearance of all fallen leaves from the whole of the areas listed in the Appendices fortnightly between 10 October and 31 January in each year of the Contract. In carrying out this operation the Contractor shall in particular remove leaves from paths, grass areas and the surface of shrub beds. The leaf clearance operation shall also include the removal of leaves from beneath hedges.

5.3.2 The Contractor shall remove all leaves from site on the same day as they are collected to a place as agreed by the Supervising Officer.

5.3.3 During leaf clearance the Contractor shall ensure that no damage, compaction or undue disturbances to the soil or mulch surface takes place in planted areas, and that no damage occurs to grass or hard surfaces. Any damage so caused shall be made good by the Contractor to the satisfaction of the Supervising Officer and without additional payment.

- 5.3.4 The Contractor shall, if directed by the Supervising Officer in writing,
- (a) undertake leaf clearance from any site within the District additional to those listed in Appendices of the Specification for additional payment;
- and/or
- (b) undertake leaf clearance to the sites listed in the Appendices of the Specification at increased (for additional payment) or reduced frequencies
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## 6 Maintenance and Care of Shrub Beds

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The shrub beds to be maintained by the Contractor are listed in the Appendices. The Contractor is required to undertake the following activities;

- (a) the maintenance of beds on a frequency basis;
- (b) annual cultivation of rose and shrub beds;
- (c) the pruning and care of roses;
- (d) the pruning and care of shrubs.

### 6.1 Maintenance of Shrub Beds on Frequency Basis

- 6.1.1 Prior to undertaking any operation detailed in Section 6.3 the Contractor shall collect and remove all litter and debris from each rose and shrub bed and deliver the arising's to and dispose of at a properly licensed disposal site.
- 6.1.2 The Contractor shall remove weeds from all shrub beds listed not less than every 4 weeks from 1<sup>st</sup> March to the 31<sup>st</sup> October inclusive each year so as to ensure that on completion of each visit the bed is left weed free. Any material overhanging paths will be pruned back during these visits.

### 6.2 Annual Inspection and Topping up of Mulch

The Contractor shall in each year of the Contract during the period of February and March on all the rose and shrub beds listed spread and bring up the minimum depth of mulch to 75mm over the whole of the bed. The Contractor shall use coarse grade bark mulch, previously approved by the Supervising Officer for this purpose. The Contractor shall give to the Supervising Officer one working days' notice of the commencement of this operation on each occasion. Where roses and shrubs require pruning in the spring this pruning work shall be completed on a particular bed before the mulch is topped up.

### 6.3 Pruning and Care of Shrubs and Young Trees

- 6.3.1 Once a year, the Contractor shall undertake the pruning and care of a variety of different species of shrubs at the locations shown in the Appendices. The Contractor's attention is drawn to the fact that the method and timing of shrub pruning differs according to the species and cultivars of the shrubs. Appendix 1 of this Specification – "Guidelines for the pruning of Shrubs" details the timing and method of pruning for each classification of shrub. Any change to this guidelines set out in Appendix 1 must only be undertaken with the prior written approval of the Supervising Officer. The works of pruning and care shall be undertaken in accordance with the guidelines for pruning of shrubs set out in Appendix 1 of this Specification and in accordance with the following requirements:-
  - (a) Prune each shrub as appropriate to the species to produce a healthy and vigorous shrub with a strong framework. When pruning the shape and balance shall be maintained ensuring the maximum amount of flowering wood is produced.
  - (b) Shrubs causing nuisance by overhanging or obscuring sight lines, paths or roadways at the time of pruning specified or at any other time shall be cut back by the Contractor to the line of the path, road or to clear sight lines. Care must be taken by the Contractor however to avoid a 'vertical clipped hedge effect' at the path or road edge or along sight lines by making cuts to produce a natural shaped appearance. Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 relating to safety during hedge cutting shall apply to the pruning of shrubs.

- (c) pruning shall be carried out using sharp secateurs and hand saws. Cuts shall be cleanly made without damaging or tearing the stem and the Supervising Officer shall be notified by the contractor of any occurrence of disease or fungus.
- (d) where shrubs have been incorrectly pruned, the Contractor shall make good, carrying out remedial pruning or replacing the plant as required by the Supervising Officer and such work will be carried out by the Contractor without additional payment.
- (e) All suckers shall be removed from graft stock, by cutting them back level with source stem or root.

6.3.2 The Contractor shall, immediately upon completion of pruning of shrubs in a particular bed, separate diseased arisings and deliver to and dispose of at a properly licensed disposal site. All non-diseased arisings shall be disposed of as agreed with the Supervising Officer.

Immediately upon completion of the pruning the Contractor shall rake over each bed to remove footprints and shall leave it with a neat and tidy appearance.

### 6.3.3 **Maintenance of Recently Planted Trees**

The Contractor shall undertake the following works to staked young trees and unstaked trees in the shrub beds and staked young trees in separate tree circles:

- (a) annually inspect each staked tree and remove any dead damaged or diseased or broken branches and trim the remaining spur and leave it smooth and regular;
- (b) annually inspect and remove dead, severely diseased and damaged, vandalised and uprooted young trees and report the loss to the Supervising Officer.
- (c) annually visually check tree stake and tie, refirm loose stakes, supply and replace broken tree stakes and adjust each tie such that the tree growth is not constrained and the tie itself does not become strained or cause damage to the tree. Three complete years after tree planting the stake and ties shall be removed unless otherwise directed by the Supervising Officer in writing.
- (b) for trees planted in tree beds annually, between March and October remove all weed growth, including the roots of perennial weeds, within a radius of 750mm from the tree. For trees planted in grassed areas, mulch rings shall be weeded in accordance with 6.3 and 6.4. Weeding around trees planted in shrub and rose beds shall be carried out under Sections 6.2 and 6.3
- (e) collect and shred arisings from (a) to (d) above and dispose of in a manner agreed with the Supervising Officer

#### 6.4 **Removal of Sucker Growth from Lime Trees**

The Contractor shall once per year during November remove all epicormic shoots from the base of the large lime trees as listed. All shoots between ground level and a height of three metres shall be cut with pruners as close to the tree bark as possible. All arising's shall be collected and disposed of in a manner agreed with the Supervising Officer.

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## 7 Floral Displays

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- 7.1 The Contractor shall prepare, erect, maintain and remove the floral displays detailed in the Appendices. The displays shall be installed during the first week of June and shall remain in place until the second week of October of the same year, unless instructed to remove earlier.
- 7.2 The Contractor shall ensure that his designs present an attractive amenity, enhance the appearance of the town and reflect the local ambience. The designs should be varied each year of the Contract.
- 7.3 The Contractor shall be responsible for the following activities:
- design of the planting schemes
  - supply of the containers
  - preparation of the containers, purchase, storage, delivery and planting of plants, including irrigation and replacement of dead, diseased, damaged and uprooted plants with plants of equal maturity
  - general after care, irrigation and feeding to maintain the plants in a bright, healthy and vigorous condition, encourage flower growth and to be free of weeds
  - removal of containers at the end of the season, disposal of the contents and storage of the containers until next required.
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## Appendix 1: Guidelines for Pruning of Shrubs

Shrub Genus	Shrub Classification
Aucuba	A
Berberis	A
Buddleia	D
Ceanothus	A
Choisya	A
Cistus	A
Cornus (Dogwood sp. Stool down to 150mm)	D
Continus	A
Cotoneaster	A
Cytisus	A
Elaeagnus	A
Escallonia	A
Eunonymus	A
Fatsia	A
Forsythia	B
Genista	A
Griselinia	A
Hamamelis	A
Hebe	A
Hippophae	A
Hydrangea (Dead head after flowering)	A
Ilex	A
Kerria	B
Lavendula	D
Ligustrum	A
Lonicera	A
Mahonia	A
Olearia	A
Pachysandra	A
Pernettya	A
Perovskia	C

Philadelphus	B
Potentilla	A
Prunus	A
Pyracantha	A
Rhododendron	A
Rhus	A
Ribes (except R. sanguineum)	D (B)
Romarinus	B
Rubus	D
Sambucus	D
Santolina	D
Senecio	A
Skimmia	A
Spiraea	B
Symphoricarpus	A
Syringa	A
Viburnum	A
Vinca	A
Weigela	B

### **Shrub Classification – Type 'A'**

No pruning required other than removal of dead or diseased wood. Some shaping may be carried out in late spring and when shrubs not in flower.

### **Shrub Classification – Type 'B'**

Remove some of the oldest wood and, or wood which has previously borne flowers retaining the young wood to ripen and produce flowers the following year. Pruning to be carried out immediately after flowering. Remove all dead or diseased material.

### **Shrub Classification – Type 'C'**

Remove completely on or two old stems, cut back younger flowering shoots to fresh growth of the main branches. Thin out crowded shoots and remove weak twigs. Pruning to be carried out between November and March. Remove all dead or diseased material.

### **Shrubs Classification – Type ‘D’**

During March, cut back previous season’s wood to within two or three buds of the old wood. Remove all dead or diseased material.

### **Additional Notes**

The above represents general guidelines for shrub pruning. Some of the above genera may be used as hedging material in which case they should be treated according to the hedging specification. The Contractor must note that methods of pruning will differ for species and cultivars within genera, and where there is doubt about the appropriate method, the Contractor shall consult with the Supervising Officer.