

Specification Index

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1. Grass Cutting

1 (a) General

The Contractor may use the machinery and methods as he thinks best to achieve the Standard of Grounds Maintenance required by Dursley Town Council “the Council”.

The frequency of the mowing’s will depend on conditions and it is the responsibility of the Contractor to carry out mowing during the normal growing season (1st April to 31st October) to maintain the required standard even when the frequency of mowing exceeds that which might be regarded as normal. Additional mowing’s required will be at the Contractor’s expense.

In view of the climatic conditions that may prevail in the town it is possible that some mowing’s may be necessary in March and may need to continue until November. The Contractor will, therefore, start earlier and finish later if the season and growth dictates. Additional mowing’s required will be at the Contractor’s expense.

The Contractor will complete the mowing, strimming etc of one area before moving onto the next. Wherever possible mowing work shall be carried out systematically from area to area.

As a general guide mowing would normally take place on a fourteen day calendar day cycle for all areas but climatic and soil conditions will influence the speed of grass growth and more frequent mowing’s at the Contractor’s expense may be necessary to maintain the standard required.

Without prejudice to other remedials to the Council, if the Contractor fails to carry out sufficient mowing’s to maintain the standard throughout the season and has omitted one cut, his payment will be reduced by the proportion deemed appropriate by the Town Clerk.

The Contractor should note the different and alternative types of grass cutting machinery may be required on the same area to deal with dissimilar areas and to cut grass bents that will naturally occur during the growing season.

Prior to carrying out any grass cutting operation the Contractor shall inspect on each occasion all areas to be mown and shall remove all items of litter, stones, dog faeces and similar obstructions which might cause damage or injury and all such items collected shall be removed from area for proper disposal.

1 (b) Standards

The basis of cutting and maintaining the grassed area is that all grass inclusive of all boundaries and edges are cut cleanly and evenly to the same height without damaging the existing surfaces. The standard for all areas in terms of the maximum height the grass may be allocated to reach before cutting must take place is 50mm and the minimum allowed height to which grass will be cut on each occasion is 25mm.

1(c) Extent of Works

Mowing will take place over all areas of grass up to paving, kerbs, fencing, walls and other boundaries or obstacles. All soft vegetation growth such as clover and the like shall be deemed to be part of the grass covering the areas to be mown under the contract.

1 (d) Climate and Soil

The Contractor shall adapt grass cutting operations as may be necessary to suit climatic and soil conditions and the rate of the grass growth which may vary from season to season and during any season.

Cutting shall be deferred whenever weather or ground conditions are such that it is not possible, in the opinion of the Town Clerk, to cut grass or gain access to it without damaging the grass, the ground surface or the contours or levels of the ground.

Should the Contractor cause damage to the surface or levels of the ground or create divots during grass cutting operations whether or not the Town Clerk has agreed to such operations take place, the Contractor shall reinstate such damage to the satisfaction of and within the time period stipulated by the Town Clerk. In failing to do so, the Town Clerk may instruct other persons to carry out such work with the cost of so doing being deducted from monies due to or becoming due to the Contractor or recovered as a debt.

After any long period of wet weather and/or ground conditions unsuitable for grass cutting, the Contractor shall make additional cuts to areas of exceptional growth in order to restore areas to the required standard and such shall be taken at the Contractor's expense.

In drought conditions, the Town Clerk may instruct the cutting heights be raised on all areas. In such conditions, mowing will only be required when the grass reaches the maximum permitted height. When, in the Town Clerks opinion the drought conditions no longer have an effect upon grass growth, the Town Clerk will instruct the resumption of the normal cutting heights and frequency and the Contractor will cut all grass areas to conform to the required standards of the Contract. There will be no variation of payment which would normally be due to the Contractor from the Council for the maintenance of such grassed areas.

1 (e) Machinery Breakdown

In the event of machinery breakdown so that mowing cannot take place in accordance with the programme, the Contractor shall report the breakdown to the Town Clerk immediately. Payment will not be made for cutting the relevant area(s) until normal working can be resumed and is completed.

1 (f) Special Instruction

The Town Clerk may instruct the Contractor to cut the grass more or less frequently than specified if this should be necessary because of a special occasion or to meet the requirements of a sports club's official body e.g. The Football Association. Where an additional cut is required for a special occasion or other requirement and the grass has not yet grown to a maximum of 50mm height, then the council shall pay for such a cut as an extra in accordance with the schedule of Rates.

1 (g) Relations with the Public

The Contractor's staff are permitted to ask members of the public to remove their belongings to allow mowing to be carried out. Failure to get members of the public to do so will not be accepted as a reason for not cutting grass.

If members of the public should refuse to move and/or remove their belongings, the Contractor's staff shall return as soon as the site area is clear and it is possible to complete the works. In dealing with the public the Contractor's staff shall observe common courtesy and politeness even though such may not be reciprocated and take all reasonable steps to ensure good relations between the public, the Council, and the Contractor's staff.

1(h) Liaison with regular users of the War Memorial Recreation Ground (WMRG)

Dursley Town Council request that the contractor has regular communication with the sports clubs and any other regular users of the WMRG . Contact details of the relevant groups/individuals will be provided by Dursley Town Council.

Currently Dursley Town AFC have permission from Dursley Town Council to carry out additional cutting and maintenance of the football pitches outside of this contract. All parties are encouraged to share information on routine maintenance of the pitches to prevent duplication and/or conflict.

1 (i) Cutting Methods

All grass shall normally be mown in parallel straight lines so that areas are left with a neat and tidy appearance giving a high visual standard. All grass should be cut with the minimum of overlap. On successive cuts the direction of cut will, where appropriate, be at right angles to the previous cut.

The mowing speed must be controlled so as to achieve the best standards of finish. The operator must ensure that all movement of the machine, whether mowing, turning or in transit, does not damage the sward or its visual appearance. Particularly care must be taken to avoid skidding, balding or the effects of fast turns.

Should damage occur, the Town Clerk will instruct the Contractor to reinstate the area promptly at this own expense.

A cut or cutting shall consist of as many passes in as many directions with the appropriate machinery or equipment as is necessary to cut all the grass cleanly and evenly to the standard required by the Council and the satisfaction of the Town Clerk. This is of particular application when during wet weather the grass is “laid down” by machinery or any other course giving the appearance of having been cut evenly but subsequently “springs up”. In such instances, the area will have been deemed not properly cut and the Contractor will be required to re-cut or take such action at his expense so as to provide the required standard of finish.

Grass edges will be clipped back to the turf in a clean and even manner using shears and other suitable equipment. Where grass abuts obstructions e.g. playground equipment or paved areas, it will be clipped back or strimmed back to the turf line to the same height as the main cut.

Any mowing’s landed on any paved areas will be swept off and any mowing’s landing on planted areas, shrub beds, rose beds etc will be completely removed, by the Contractor before proceeding to the next site.

1 (j) Obstructions

Grass must be cut as close as possible up to grave memorials, paving, kerbs, walls, fences, benches, play equipment, goal posts etc and around obstructions without causing damage to plants, trees or other features and other equipment.

Any accidental damage must be reported to the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

Cutting as aforementioned shall be undertaken as the same standard and frequency as that applied to the main area using methods, tools and machines as appropriate. The cutting of such areas shall be undertaken on the same day as the main area.

Growth regulators and contact herbicides are not allowed except around obstacles on certain grassed areas as permitted by the council, detailed within the contract and approved by the Town Clerk. In such cases the width of spray is to be no more than 25mm and all applications are to be carried out when possible during January, February and by no later than the 31st March in any year. Extreme care must be taken to prevent damage to trees, shrubs etc.

1 (k) Machines

Ride-on machinery will be acceptable but pedestrian operated machinery will also be required on some areas and will be essential on smaller areas.

Guards and other protective devices must be fitted on all machines and remain fitted at all times (except when maintenance is being undertaken) and all Codes of Practice observed.

Machines must be of an appropriate type, well maintained, correctly adjusted and set to the heights specified to give a clean even cut without causing damage.

1 (l) Machines – Maintenance and Service

The refuelling, cleaning and minor servicing e.g. blade changing of rotary motors must take place on paved areas, not grassed areas. Only simple maintenance operations shall be carried out on areas approved by the Town Clerk. Such areas used must be thoroughly cleansed on completion of the day's work on that area.

Refuelling should not occur on bitumen or tarmac areas.

Spilled fuels, oils etc. shall be cleaned up immediately with suitable solvents.

During servicing or refuelling engines must be switched off and machines immobilised (e.g. disconnect spark plugs).

All mowers shall be immobilised or removed from areas when the Contractor's staff leave the area and no equipment is to be stored at any area nor left overnight thereon.

The Contractor shall ensure that his staff are familiar with and adhere to the Codes of Practice relating to mowers and the safe storage and handling of petroleum spirit/diesel oil and standard operating procedures for individual makes of mowers.

2. Herbicide, Pesticide and Fungicide Application on Grass

2 (a) General

The Contactor will allow for the cost of supplying and applying selective herbicide, pesticides and fungicides to grassed areas to control weeds, pests, fungi and in some cases to control grass edge growth and the relevant Codes of practice must be adhered to.

Details of all applications must be recorded on Controlled Products Application Record Sheets which should be returned to the Town Clerk weekly along with plans marked to show all the areas treated.

2 (b) Extent of Herbicide Applications

Each year approximately one third of the total grass areas shall be treated with herbicide, the aim being to treat all grass areas over a three year programme.

The Contractor shall provide the Town Clerk, two weeks in advance, a programme of the scheduled herbicide works.

2 (c) Timing of Herbicide Applications

The Contractor will agree with the Town Clerk not less than twenty-four hours (sixty hours at weekends and longer at Public and Bank holidays) in advance of the time of application. The manufacturer's instructions must be followed as to the delay between application and the mowing operations.

The Contractor will phase the application in conjunction with grass cutting so as to give maximum effect and control.

Generally grass shall not be cut three days before or five days after herbicide treatment. No containers or bags of herbicide or applications shall be left unattended on any areas.

2 (d) Unsatisfactory Application of Herbicide

If it is apparent that any part of the area of grass treated with herbicide has been missed or the herbicide has been ineffective, the Contractor is responsible for repeating at this own expense the applications to the satisfaction of the Town Clerk.

2 (e) Pesticides

Occasionally, and upon the instructions of the Town Clerk, it will be necessary to apply pesticides to control worms or other pests and diseases of the turf. The pesticides to be used in the undertaking of such works shall be supplied by the Contractor. All control aspects detailed for herbicides shall apply.

2 (f) Fungicides

Occasionally, and upon instruction of the Town Clerk, it will be necessary to apply fungicidal treatments for prevention of Fusarium and Cortisum (fairy rings) though such will not be done in periods of drought unless well-watered in. The fungicides to be used in the undertaking of the works shall be supplied by the Contractor. All control aspects detailed for herbicides will similarly apply.

3. Fertiliser**3 (a) General**

The Contractor shall supply a spring dressing of fertiliser to areas requiring attention. The extent is to be agreed annually by the Town Clerk.

The type of fertilizer the Contractor intends to use must first receive prior approval of the Town Clerk and the method of spreading must be approved by the Town Clerk in advance.

All fertilizer spreaders must be correctly calibrated. Fertiliser shall not be put into the spreader whilst it is standing on non-turf areas, any spillages shall be swept up immediately.

No fertilizer will be applied without prior approval of the Town Clerk.

3 (b) Extent and Distribution

Fertiliser will be applied methodically and evenly in an orderly manner over the whole of the specified area.

No overlap shall occur in the passes over the grass so as to cause uneven growth or colour. Fertiliser shall be applied during showery weather or if necessary subsequently irrigated. The fertiliser shall be applied at the manufacturers' recommended rate per square metre in two passes in agreement with the Town Clerk.

Special care must be taken to ensure the fertiliser does not scorch or damage the grass area, particularly at edges, turning areas etc.

Care must be taken to remove any spillage of fertiliser and to ensure that none is allowed to fall on areas of paving or planted areas.

Any areas of grass which subsequently show symptoms of fertiliser scorch shall be thoroughly watered to revive the grass.

Without prejudice to other remedies available to the Council, if in the opinion of the Town Clerk permanent damage has been caused, the contractor shall at his own expense either re-turf or re-seed the areas in question as instructed by the Town Clerk.

No containers or bags of fertiliser or applications shall be left, unattended on any areas.

3 (c) Mowing and Fertilising

The grassed areas (except for areas planted with bulbs) shall be mown three days before application of fertilizer and shall remain unmown for five days afterwards. Normal grass mowing shall then be resumed and the Contractor shall make allowance for additional costs which may be required to bring the sward back to the standard of the contract.

4. Edging of all Grassed Areas.

4 (a) General

All finished edges on grass areas will be sharp, neat and slightly off vertical so as to undercut the grass edge. Edges which may occasionally have to be straightened shall be prepared with a line.

All arising from edgework shall be collected, removed and suitably disposed by the Contractor.

Grass edge trimmings shall be collected and removed on every occasion when edging is carried out.

4 (b) Channels

The Contractor may be required to form, re-form or maintain any necessary channels to provide suitable mowing margins and keep them free of weeds.

The width and depth of the channels will be agreed with the Town Clerk.

4 (c) Kerbing/Paths

Except where growth regulators are permitted the Contractor will be required to cut a clean edge to all grass edges where they meet kerbing, paths or paved areas.

Each year all the relevant edges on all areas will be half mooned, the cuttings removed and disposed by the Contractor.

4 (e) Areas Adjacent to Walls, Fences, etc.

Mowing must be carried out as close as possible to all walls fences, railings, etc and trimmed then carried out as necessary on the same day as the mowing is done so as to equally reduce grass growth.