**Grounds Maintenance Specification**

**for Elvetham Heath Parish Council**

## INTRODUCTION

The Parish of Elvetham Heath is situated on the north-west edge of Fleet in the Hart District of North Hampshire. It comprises of mainly a housing development of just under 2000 dwellings and has a population of around 5600 which continues to grow.

Elvetham Heath Parish Council (the Council) was created in 2010. It is responsible for the provision and management of facilities within the parish, the notable exception being the nature reserve and the duck pond which are maintained by the District Council’s Countryside Service.

The maintenance of public open spaces, highway verges and roundabouts is currently provided by a local grounds maintenance company and includes but is not restricted to the following:

* Grass cutting and strimming
* Pruning and maintenance of shrubs and hedges
* Pruning and maintenance of roundabouts
* Clearing swales and ponds annually
* Annual maintenance of badger runs
* Clearance of litter and debris from public spaces
* Provision and application of weedkiller
* Provision and application of fertiliser
* Over-seeding of bare grass patches as necessary
* Provision and application of bark chippings to shrub beds
* Clearance of leaves

## CONTRACT SPECIFICATION

See attached appendix 1 for detail by area

**Grass Cutting**

1 April – 31 October this is flexible and weather dependant and is carried out on a fortnightly basis

* All grass areas to be close mown at 14-day intervals at a length no longer than 50mm.
* Large Open Spaces to be cut & mulched dependent on weather conditions. Highway verges to be cut and collected. No areas to be drop cut.
* All edges and grass around obstacles to be cut on each occasion that grass is cut
* Prior to each cut inspect all areas and remove all litter, stones and other debris that might cause personal injury or damage.
* Molehills etc must be spread and levelled.
* Grass on banks or traverses to be maintained to the same standard as that on immediately adjacent level area.
* All arisings from grass cutting must be removed. Adjacent footpaths, driveways and hard standings shall be cleared of any arisings.

**Winter Grass Maintenance.**

* All bare grass patches to be over-seeded in the autumn following the grass cutting season.
* Council to be advised of any other required repair work outside of the contract.
* In early spring prior to grass cutting season, all grassed areas to be cleared of debris eg, branches & twigs, litter etc, and a full cut carried out to remove over-wintering grass.

**Hedge Cutting.**

* All established hedges to be cut with motor-powered hedge cutters. Grass and weeds should be removed from the base together with any litter. Hedges should be trimmed as appropriate for highway safety. The cuttings should be swept up from carriageways and footways and removed. Trimming hedges during the bird nesting season should be avoided unless hedges are preventing the passage, or affecting the safety of the highway user, including cyclists and pedestrians. The most active period of bird nesting season is from 1st March to 31st July.
* Cut back to prevent obscuring of sight lines and encroachment of pathways, roads etc
* All arisings to be removed and disposed of offsite
* Schedule minimum 3 cuts during the growing season – April-October.

**Shrubs Pruning.**

* Pruning to be carried out in accordance with best horticultural practice for the species.
* All dead, diseased and damaged material to be removed together with any shoots over pathways or roads and those obscuring sightlines.
* All arisings to be removed and disposed of offsite

**Shrub and Flower beds**

* All beds to be kept free of weeds, litter and debris.
* Any plants damaged as a result of chemical weed control to be replaced at contractor’s own expense.
* Fork over all exposed soil areas in beds and borders during late autumn and early spring
* All beds to be mulched annually with bark to a depth of 50mm and spread evenly. Work to be undertaken by end February each year.

**Weed Control**

* All footpaths, bases of buildings, stone areas, hard standing, fence lines, drains and car parks to be kept free of weeds and vegetation at all times.
* As necessary, throughout the growing season treat hard surfaced areas with weed killer. All operational staff to be trained to PA1/6 certifications and certificates made available to EHPC upon contract award.
* Once weed killer has taken effect, all deleterious material must be collected and removed from site.
* Any damage caused to adjoining grass or planted areas by spray drift or ‘creep’ is to be made good by the contractor at his sole cost.
* Any invasive weeds located on site eg Japanese knotweed, Marestail are to be addressed and treated at additional cost as agreed with EHPC.

**Roundabouts**

* The height of vegetation should not exceed 1 metre in height. Schedule minimum 3 visits during the growing season – April-October

**Swales and Ponds**

* Annual maintenance to cut back to ground level.

**Badger Runs**

* Annual maintenance of badger runs cut back vegetation to allow gap of 1m from the boundary fence

**General Winter Maintenance**

* Contractor to ensure all areas are kept clear of dead leaves, twigs and branches, litter and debris. All to be removed from site.
* Winter Salt/grit application – when temperature drops to zero and below to attend site before 8am to apply salt to footpath on the green, Key Car Park and Turners Way Car Park and to keep salt bins stocked.