

The Grounds Maintenance Service

We provide a grounds maintenance service to ensure that our housing schemes remain safe, attractive places to live. We employ CGM to maintain our communal areas and the requirements of them are set out in a contract specification. The specification is a lengthy document and so we have summarised the key points for you here, so you can know the service you can expect and how the contract will be managed.

Area of service	What you can expect:
Maintenance of Car parks and other hard standings	<p>Areas will be swept and all debris removed on a monthly basis. A blower can be used, so long as the arisings are removed from the site. Autumn leaves will be collected between October and December.</p> <p>Weeds will be treated with weedkiller in April, June and September.</p> <p>Once per year gullies will be cleared of all silt and all signage will be cleaned</p>
Control of Moss, Ivy and weeds	<p>Moss will be treated with algaecide and removed once it has died.</p> <p>During the growing season, weeds will be spot treated with weedkiller or removed by hand where this is not appropriate. The chemical takes some time to work, so the effect will not be immediately visible and can be washed away if it rains.</p> <p>Ivy will be prevented from growing on buildings and trees, the contractor will sever the vine at the base and allow the ivy to die back over the coming weeks.</p>
Grass cutting	<p>Grass will be cut fortnightly between March and November and a granular fertiliser will be applied twice per year, once in the Spring and again in Autumn.</p>
Litter picking	<p>Litter picking will take place across the whole scheme on a monthly basis, including in shrub beds. The contractor is not responsible for taking away bulky items.</p>
Hedge Trimming	<p>Hedges will be trimmed in May, July and September so that they are kept to their current size and shape. They will not be cut when they are in flower or if birds are nesting. Clippings will be taken away.</p>
Shrub bed maintenance	<p><i>Encroachment prune:</i> Some shrubs will be cut back in May, July and September if they are obstructing or interfering with windows, roadways, footpaths entrances or notice boards.</p> <p><i>Major pruning:</i> All shrubs will be trimmed back in June, August and October to ensure there is no overall increase in width/height over any 12 month period.</p> <p>Shrubs will not be cut when they are in flower or if birds are nesting. Clippings will be taken away.</p> <p>The shrub beds will be raked, weeded and litter picked monthly.</p>
Rose bush management	<p>Rose bushes will be pruned between mid-March and early April and throughout the year pest control, composting and soil cultivation will take place to keep the roses in good condition.</p>
Trees	<p>Off-shoots from the base or trunk of the tree will be removed in May and August.</p>

Key points:

- CGM will attend to each scheme on a fortnightly basis between March and September, and on a monthly basis between October and December. CGM may assign different jobs to different teams, for example there may be a dedicated hedge cutting team and another team who will come on another day to attend to the grass.
- CGM are only required to carry out work in the contract specification, if an area of your scheme is in need of landscaping improvements or additional planting, this is not a reflection on the contractor's performance. Please get in touch if you have a suggestion for improvement to the grounds and we will discuss what can be achieved within our allocated budget or as part of a community project.
- Long spells of wet weather result in the greenery growing significantly faster. There is no provision to increase the number of visits. We will provide updates via Social Media on the progress of works and any challenges to delivery, and will respond to any queries promptly.
- All chemicals used by CGM are certified safe to use and these do not pose a health risk to any person or animal or aquatic wildlife.
- We are aware that over the years some grassed areas have been overtaken by weeds and moss, and in order to maintain the overall appearance of the scheme we may ask CGM not to apply a weedkiller to these areas. We will be undertaking a lawn improvement program over the life of the contract and will be weeding and re-seeding wherever budgets allow.
- Residents wanting to maintain or improve an area of Suffolk Housing communal land in place of, or with CGM must obtain written permission from Suffolk Housing first. Any arrangements will be reviewed periodically to ensure the garden remains attractive and there are no risks to the health and safety of others.

How the service is being managed:

There are over 150 schemes in the contract and we are committed to ensuring that the grounds maintenance service is consistently delivered to a high standard across all areas. To achieve this:

- CGM staff will update us with 'before and after' photos on each visit so that we can be assured that the specification is being met. In addition CGM's team leader visits all estates on a monthly basis to audit the service provided and will manage his team and respond to any service complaints or queries.
- Our staff will inspect schemes *at least* once every three months, to ensure the specification is being met and the communal areas remain attractive.
- We record all contacts received from residents and work in partnership with CGM to answer queries and resolve any issues of under performance promptly. Areas of concern, compliments and complaints are discussed at the monthly meetings.
- We pro-actively engage with our residents to understand what is working well and what needs attention, and performance updates will be given to the Resident Scrutiny Panel.

Further information:

Feedback or queries: email: enquiries@suffolkhousing.org or phone: **01284 767224**

Further Information: www.suffolkhousing.org

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