



Open Spaces Service Standards

Introduction

Open Spaces is responsible for the Grounds Maintenance of parks and designated open space areas in Thanet. Our service objective is to maintain, manage, improve and protect quality open space and landscaped areas. The provision of quality open space has a social, economic and environmental benefit to people's lives.

Aims

We aim to manage Thanet's parks and open spaces to offer:

- Peaceful enjoyment, recreation, entertainment and delight to those who use them.
- Enhancement, protection and conservation for the benefit of this and future generations.
- Well maintained, accessible, safe and secure parks and open spaces.
- Deliver value for money.
- We have health and safety policies and systems in place to ensure good working practices.

What does the Open Spaces Service do?

- Grass Maintenance
- Shrub and Flower Bed Maintenance
- Hedge Cutting
- Sports Field Maintenance
- Weed Control
- Tree Maintenance
- Play Area Maintenance
- Allotments (Margate)
- Minor Works
- Machinery
- Pest Control
- Graffiti Removal
- Benches

What standards can I expect from Open Spaces?

Grass Maintenance

Grass mowing season is normally from March to the end of October and maintenance is carried out a minimum of 8 times per year. There are variations to this such as sports pitches which are cut more times.

Grassland Bee areas are cut on a rotation 2 times per year depending on location and ecological value.

Amenity grass areas are mown every 15 working days and the clippings are not collected.

Grass edges are chemically treated depending on their location.

Naturalised bulb areas are cut in late July once the leaves of the bulbs have died down naturally returning its energy to the bulb ready for the next season.

Shrub and Flower bed Maintenance

Weeds in shrub and flower beds will be controlled by hand-weeding, mulching and chemical control. Any litter within the planted areas will be removed at the time of visit. All shrubs and rose beds are pruned and shaped to ensure public safety and avoid obstruction, taking in to account good horticultural practice.

Hedge Cutting

All hedges will be cut depending on species once to twice a year, all clippings are removed for composting.

Sports Field Maintenance

Sports fields will be provided to meet the needs and aspirations of the user. Wear areas will be reinstated once a year.

Weed Control

Weed control will be carried out on grass edges, and hard surfaces e.g. paths and war memorials.

Tree Maintenance

Requests for inspections of trees in Open Spaces will be carried out. All works required following inspection will be placed onto a works programme and carried out according to priority. Full inspections take place over a three year rolling programme with trees for concern monitored on an annual basis.

Play Area Maintenance

Staff are trained to carry out inspections to the standard of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). All play areas are regularly inspected for safety and cleanliness. All repairs will be carried out promptly to RoSPA standards.

Graffiti

All graffiti of a racist or explicit nature will be removed from TDC property immediately, all other graffiti will be removed or painted over as soon as possible.

Allotments

We manage allotment sites in Margate.

We maintain the water and compost toilets and fencing at each site and carry out an annual plot holder maintenance inspection.

Minor Works

Minor works carry out maintenance and repairs throughout Thanet and this includes general small works e.g. fencing, brickwork, signage, repair of potholes in open spaces, benches etc.

Pest Control

Staff are trained to deal with rats, mice, wasps and insects that may cause harm to the public in open spaces.

What We Expect From Our Users:

- Please have respect for all users
- Please do not graffiti or vandalise
- Please ensure you clean up after your pet and dispose of waste correctly
- Please dispose of your litter, including chewing gum in litter bins provided, or take your rubbish home with you
- Please treat all furniture and play equipment with respect

What Are Our Customer Care Values?

- We will handle your request promptly, grass cutting related problems will be dealt with 10 working days and emergency tree enquiries within 24 hours.
- We will provide a helpful and courteous service
- We will fully protect your privacy and information about you will be treated as per Data Protection procedure
- We will undertake all work in the Cemeteries in a sympathetic and caring manner sensitive to the needs of the bereaved

Sustainability

- We aim to minimise pesticide use
- We use only plants grown in a peat free compost
- We aim to recycle all our green waste (except invasive weeds)

Conservation and Heritage

Where appropriate each park has a section where we try to keep as natural as possible

In these areas, we may only cut the grass once per year, we will leave dead trees where they are if safe to do so or we may lay them down to encourage the presence of natural wildlife.

We aim to maintain all listed structures to the best of our ability.

Community Involvement

We have a number of affiliated groups of Friends who are invaluable in helping us to maintain and improve our open spaces.

We aim to provide and maintain appropriate facilities for all members of our community.

Management

All areas of work carried out are recorded on round or checklists to ensure an audit trail. We aim to conduct all inspections and works digitally by the end of 2019.

Contact

For further information please contact:

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