

Service Specification: Grounds Maintenance

Introduction

Cranbrook Town Council invites tenders for the provision of grounds maintenance across Cranbrook Country Park, public open spaces, and designated green areas. The contractor will be responsible for delivering a high-quality, environmentally sensitive maintenance service in accordance with this specification over the following areas of public open space (POS) including the Country Park, play areas, green corridors, and other designated locations. The contract will cover a range of operations including grass management, weed control, scrub and shrub maintenance as well as path maintenance.

Hedge Cutting will be under the procurement of a separate contract unless agreed otherwise by Cranbrook Town Council. This will follow the Hedgerow Management Plan and the Hedge Management Cycle.

Meadow Grassland, to be cut, bailed, and removed within the Country Park, will be under the procurement of a separate tender by a chosen contractor unless agreed otherwise by Cranbrook Town Council.

Summary of Location & Tasks

Detail specifications of each task provided further below.

1. Country Park Phase 1 – Great Meadow

	Task	Frequency	Notes
1.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders.
1.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be reviewed and cut after agricultural cut from separate contract.
1.3	Scrub vegetation coppicing	Rotational	No more than 50% per year for habitat retention.
1.4	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.

2. Country Park Phase 2 – Long Meadow

	Task	Frequency	Notes
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2.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include Path borders.
2.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be reviewed and cut after agricultural cut from separate contract.
2.3	Scrub vegetation coppicing	Rotational	No more than 50% per year for habitat retention.
2.4	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
2.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

3. Country Park Phase 3 – Stone Meadow

	Task	Frequency	Notes
3.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders.
3.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be reviewed and cut after agricultural cut from separate contract.
3.3	Scrub vegetation coppicing	Rotational	No more than 50% per year for habitat retention.
3.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
3.4	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

4. Play Area - Cranbrook Education Campus

	Task	Frequency	Notes
4.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
4.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut as specified in the attached plan.
4.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To

			include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
4.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
4.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

5. Play Area - Crannaford

	Task	Frequency	Notes
5.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
5.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut as specified in the attached plan.
5.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
5.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
5.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

6. Play Area - Country Park NEAP & Pump Track

	Task	Frequency	Notes
6.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
6.2	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
6.3	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.

7. Play Area – Hayes Square

	Task	Frequency	Notes
7.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path

			borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
7.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut as specified in the attached plan.
8.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
9.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
10.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

8. Play Area – Northwood Acres

	Task	Frequency	Notes
8.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
8.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut as specified in the attached plan.
8.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures..
8.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
8.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

9. Play Area – Platinum Park

	Task	Frequency	Notes
9.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
10.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut as specified in the attached plan.
10.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To

			include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
10.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
10.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

10. Play Area - Skate Park

	Task	Frequency	Notes
10.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
10.2	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
10.3	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
10.4	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

11. Play Area – St Martin’s

	Task	Frequency	Notes
10.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding play surfaces are safe.
10.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut as specified in the attached plan.
10.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
10.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility for public use.
10.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

12. Allotment – Crannaford

	Task	Frequency	Notes
12.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding areas are safe.
12.2	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures. Strictly no herbicides.
12.3	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.

13. Allotment – Southbrook

	Task	Frequency	Notes
13.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders. Ensure surrounding areas are safe.
13.2	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures. Strictly no herbicides.
13.3	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.

14. Ingrams Sports Pitches, Pavilion and Boundaries

	Task	Frequency	Notes
14.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	Twice monthly during growing season around pitches 16 cuts/year (March–October) for play areas.	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include pitch borders and edges.
14.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut if designated such as borders and wider areas.
14.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
14.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.

14.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.
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15. Town Square

	Task	Frequency	Notes
15.1	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include paths and footings/fixtures.
15.2	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
15.3	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

16. Train Station

	Task	Frequency	Notes
16.1	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.. Contractor to suggest methods and use. To include paths and footings/fixtures.
16.2	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
16.3	Scrub vegetation coppicing	Rotational	No more than 50% per year for habitat retention.

17. Roundabouts – Phases 1 & 2

	Task	Frequency	Notes
17.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year	Timing essential for visibility and aesthetics.
17.2	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly/Annually	Weed control, pruning, and mulch top-up.

17.3	Weed control (hard landscaping)	As needed	Edges, kerbs, signage bases.
17.4	Litter clearance	Regular	Especially near traffic islands.

18. Public Open Spaces – Phase 1

	Task	Frequency	Notes
18.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders and edges along applicable MLR and areas POS. Ensure surrounding surfaces are safe.
18.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut if designated such as borders and wider areas.
18.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
18.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
18.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

19. Public Open Spaces – Phase 2

	Task	Frequency	Notes
19.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders and edges along applicable MLR and areas POS. Ensure surrounding surfaces are safe.
19.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut if designated such as borders and wider areas.
19.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
19.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
19.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

20. Public Open Spaces – Phase 3

	Task	Frequency	Notes
20.1	Amenity grass cutting (25–50mm)	16 cuts/year (March–October)	Adjust mowing in dry/wet periods. To include path borders and edges along applicable MLR and areas POS. Ensure surrounding surfaces are safe.
20.2	Meadow Grass	Once/twice per annum	To be cut if designated such as borders and wider areas.
20.3	Selective weed control	As needed	Contractor to suggest methods and proposed treatment. To include pernicious weeds, paths and footings/fixtures.
20.4	Litter Clearance	Regular (along with any works carried out)	Maintain safety, hygiene and accessibility.
20.5	Ornamental shrub maintenance	Monthly weeding Annual pruning (Oct–Mar)	Mulch as required. Watering during times of drought.

Specifications

1 Grassland Management

- 1.1 Remove litter, stones or other debris, collected and removed by the contractor immediately prior to grass cutting operations. Care shall be exercised when mowing or strimming around trees and hedges or other structures.
- 1.2 Remove persistent pernicious weed growth and/or manual hand strimming of target areas either in late summer when adjacent grassland is mown or in early spring. Care will be taken adjacent to riparian and aquatic habitats to prevent pollution of such habitats.
- 1.3 *Methods of treatment for pernicious weeds must be approved by Cranbrook Town Council. Prior to work commencement.*

Meadow Grassland

- 1.4 Areas such as meadow banks, corners and areas of residential POS unable to be reached by agricultural cut (tractor) will require mechanical cut by hand as identified in the Location and Task Summary.
- 1.5 At a height of 100mm in late spring/late summer, cutting to be collected and removed off site.
- 1.6 Grassland adjacent to hedgerows and woodland/plantation habitat will be cut once on alternate years with ruderal species being allowed to colonise for further species and habitat diversity. Arisings will be left for 48 hours to allow dispersal of seeds and

invertebrates prior to removal, to encourage grassland establishment and prevent soil enrichment and thatching.

- 1.7 Designated adjacent grasslands will be managed to grow into linear woodlands

Tussock Grassland

- 1.8 To control scrub and bramble development tussocky areas may need cutting every 2-3 years at a height of 150mm between October and February. For wildlife, this cutting is best done on a rotational basis so that no more than half the area is cut in any one year leaving part as an undisturbed refuge.

Amenity Grassland

- 1.9 Cut to a height of 35-40mm as required, Once established, amenity grassland will be cut 16 times per year between March and October. This is to include designated and established desire lines.
- 1.10 All litter, stones or other debris will be collected and removed by the contractor immediately prior to grass cutting operations.
- 1.11 Play area amenity grass to be cut at a length of 30mm to ensure safe ground conditions.
- 1.12 Mowing will be reduced during prolonged dry periods and the mowing height increased to 50mm at such times. Similarly, in very wet conditions all grass cutting operations will cease until conditions allow for grass cutting to take place. Variations to the number of cuts per year will be made by prior agreement with the Clerk only.
- 1.13 Spot-treat persistent pernicious weeds using agreed weed control measures following the first season's growth and/or manual hand-strimming of target areas either in late summer when adjacent grassland is mown or in early spring. Care will be taken when using agreed control measures adjacent to riparian and aquatic habitats to prevent pollution of such.
- 1.14 Path edges and verges to be cut as amenity grass at a height of 50mm to maintain clear presentable access throughout.

Scrub Vegetation

- 1.15 Coppicing of scrub vegetation on a rotational basis with no more than half cut in any one year, to include small scrub trees

Ornamental Shrubs

Management of ornamental shrubs as follows:

- 1.16 Remove weed growth by hand to prevent competition for nutrients and water.
- 1.17 Prune back shrubs (no more than one third of woody growth) during October to March. Trim shrubs back from paths etc. Prune dead, damaged, or overgrown wood, ensuring no more than one third of the shrub is removed. Avoid pruning during active growing months to minimise stress on the plants.
- 1.18 Reapply organic mulch levels as necessary. Typically, annually or when mulch becomes thin. Add a 2–3inch layer of organic mulch around the base of shrubs to retain moisture and suppress weeds. Ensure mulch is not piled against the trunk to avoid rot.
- 1.19 Deadhead after flowering. Remove spent flowers to promote new growth and improve appearance.