Leafield Parish Council

Specification for grass cutting – Churchyard – March 2021
St Michael and all Angels Church, Leafield

1. General

1.1 The Contractor shall use appropriate equipment, and machinery driven or operated in a manner appropriate to the task, by skilled operatives.

1.2 The Contractor shall ensure that machines and equipment do not damage the sward or its visual appearance.

1.3 Once a cut or treatment has started on site it shall be completed in one operation.

1.4 Litter, stones and other debris shall be collected immediately prior to cutting or treatment being undertaken. Leafield Parish Council shall not be liable for any damage or injury to the Contractor's equipment or employees, however caused.

1.5 Cutting shall be appropriate to the type of grass areas being treated.

1.6 Every care shall be taken when mowing around trees. Where overhanging branches prevent machinery being used, grass shall be cut by other appropriate means. Any trees that are damaged as a result of mowing shall be replaced at the Contractor's own expense in the following planting season.

1.7 The Contractor shall exercise every care in carrying out works around flat and protruding obstacles in grass areas. Heavy or vibrating machinery shall not be driven over manhole and duct covers, culverts or narrow ditches and grips unless it is obvious they are strong enough to remain undamaged.

1.8 Damaged occasioned by the Contractor to service covers and structures shall be immediately reported to the Council and repaired as required, at the Contractor's cost.

1.9 The Contractor shall ensure that the arising or residue from any activity involved in maintaining the grass areas does not enter any water course, drain or sewer. Any such occurrence shall be immediately reported to the Council and the Contractor shall be liable.

2. Grass cutting

2.1 Grass shall be cut to a consistent height over the churchyard.

2.2 The cutting season is from April until the last week of October, cutting fortnightly.

2.3 All open areas between the gravestones, memorials and over graves without edging will be cut or strimmed if required. Mowing operations must not damage any permanent or removable fittings.

2.4 Graves with edges which are not obviously being attended will be strimmed.

2.5 Banks and steep slopes shall be cut so that the appearance and cut height is similar to the surrounding area.

2.6 Grass shall not be cut in adverse weather and ground conditions. Cutting shall only recommence when it is safe to do so, without danger or damaging the sward, surface levels or contours of the ground.

2.7 Where inclement weather conditions delay normal cutting programmes the Contractor is required to resume work as soon as practically possible and is required to restore works to the specified standard.

2.8 Cut grass in grassed areas is not to be collected, but allowed to fly, evenly dispersed over the ground and not left in mounds. Other green waste shall be removed for disposal.

2.9 Bulb areas in the grass must be allowed to complete their growth cycle before mowing takes place. The first cut should take place at least six weeks after the completion of flowering. All clipping should be removed and the area should revert to the regime of the surrounding grass.

2.10 Wildflower area(s) marked on the plan must be left unmowed. A clean mowing edge should surround these areas. Seasonal wild flowers, for example primroses, between and on graves should be left until they have finished flowering and seeding.

2.11 Grass cuttings must be cleared from paths.

3. Edging and Trimming

3.1 Grass abutting walls, hedges and other plant growth shall be trimmed level with the general sward level at each cut.

3.2 Grass abutting gully gratings, manhole and inspection covers or the like within the sward shall be trimmed as often as necessary to keep a clear line to the edge of the obstruction.

3.3 Paths shall be neatly edged as required.

3.4 Growth regulators or contact herbicides are not be used to edges of grass areas without the express written permission of the Council.

4. Chemical Applications

4.1 Application of chemicals shall be undertaken in compliance with all current regulations, including the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986, The Control of Pesticides (Amendment) Regulations 1997, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended), The Control of Pollution Act 1974, The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and relevant DEFRA Codes of Practice.

4.2 The Contractor shall provide a list of pesticides and fertilisers to be applied under this contract for written acceptance by the Council.

4.3 The Contractor shall inform the Council at least 48 hours before the application of chemicals is undertaken, with the reason stated for why the chemical application is required.
The Contractor shall be responsible for determining that:

- The type of chemical is suitable for purpose;
- The timing of operations is both horticulturally correct and socially acceptable;
- The rates of application are correct;
- The method of application is appropriate to the prevailing circumstances.

4.4 Chemicals shall only be applied to those areas specified on the tender maps.

4.5 Operatives shall be suitably trained and certified for the application of pesticides and fertilisers, and evidence of training shall be provided to the Council.

5. Insurance

5.1 Contractors must hold a minimum of £5 million Public Liability Insurance.

5.2 A copy of the current Public Liability Insurance certificate should be submitted with the tender.