

Appendix 3 - Grounds Maintenance

Continental

The new Grounds Maintenance Contract commenced on 1st August 2023 as a 8 + 8 contract with Continental Landscapes, who also operate Grounds Maintenance for Richmond and Westminster.

Despite starting a contract at one of the most difficult times of the year, the new contractor mobilised very well; initially operating from one depot at Vale Farm.

The new contract brings together the management of over 100 parks and open spaces, all Housing land of around 350 blocks and properties, around 360,000 square meters of highways verges over 600 roads, 30,000 square meters of shrub beds on the public highway, 21 allotment sites and four closed graveyards.

The major challenges faced by the contractor were levels of litter in our parks. Whilst a new process was introduced for the frequency of emptying bins; with more frequent collections taking place in busier parks, to date the contractor has collected over 300 tonnes of litter from our parks.

To combat some of the issues; there are reviews of the frequency of collections of litter and as a result of the large amount of litter being left in Roundwood Park, the contractor employed a dedicated Park Keeper, who carries out an additional litter collection later in the evening during Spring, Summer and Autumn months.

Flytipping has also been an issue and over 306 tonnes of fly tipped waste have been cleared from our parks since August 2023.

Continental Landscapes have brought an almost completely electric fleet (with the exception of Tractors) to the contract and all hand tools (with the exception of leaf blowers which run on an alternative environmentally friendly fuel source) are also electric, completely reducing the carbon footprint of their operation. Brent are leading the way in electrification of fleet and machinery in grounds maintenance contracts.

The contractor also maintains all football, rugby, cricket and Gaelic Football Sports Pitches and Bowling Greens in our parks. Feedback from the teams who play have already noticed an improvement in the quality of the grass cutting. Line marking is now carried out by a machine which operates independently and guarantees completely straight lines, proper sizing of pitch line marking and carries out the operation in much less time than a traditional line marker. A substantial amount of work has been carried out to improve the condition of the rugby pitch and the club are very happy with the quality of the work; improving playing conditions, even during one of the wettest winters on record.

The feedback from colleagues in Housing with regards to the maintenance on estates has been very positive. The Estates Manager has advised that the operatives are skilled and knowledgeable and able to answer technical questions and ability to provide alternative solutions, are responsive, go the extra mile and they have seen a

definite improvement in the quality of grounds maintenance from the previous contractor.

Whilst Parks and Housing staff can access a database operated by the contractor; which sets out the schedules for expected works, improvements are being made to the contractors webpage and system which will allow Housing residents to be able to see the schedules for themselves.

One of the biggest improvements has been the recent commencement of the pathway edging programme; an aspect which was not included in the previous contract. The contractor is removing the grass that has grown across pathways in parks and on highways verges. There is a 5 year programme in place to undertake all areas that are overgrown. Work has commenced so far on pathways in Barham Park and Woodcock Park, with impressive results, in some cases seeing a pathway effectively widened by at least half a metre.

Continental used an electric sweeper to clear the leaves from all pathways and drains in parks this year and we did not receive any complaints about leaves on paths for the first time in many years.

The constant rain has seen an increase the accumulation of moss and algae build up on pathways and in playgrounds and outdoor gym surfaces. The Contractor is working hard to keep up with the removal of this across all our sites.

There has been a great deal of partnership working with Friends of Groups since the start of the contract and feedback from these groups is positive in terms of the support being provided to encourage volunteer bulb planting days and opportunities to develop horticultural knowledge.

In summary, overall the new contract is proving to be very successful. As with any contract, there are areas where improvements can be made and the team are working closely with the contractor to ensure that it operates an efficiently and effectively as possible over the remaining years of the contract.

KPI Title	Description	Current YTD	RAG
No. Complaints completed on time	Complaints completed within agreed time scales	92%	Green
Freedom of Information completed request	FOI's/ EIRs Completed on Time	98%	Green
Overflowing Litter Bins dealt with in sufficient time	Emptying bins within a reasonable time (3 days from being reported)	87%	Yellow
No. of RIDDOR reportable incidents	No. of RIDDOR incidents which has occurred	1 (avg over year)	Green
Repairs of Sports Pitches	No. of reports made on average regarding playing standard of pitches	0.86	Green

Tennis Court Maintenance	No. of reports made regarding playing conditions of Tennis Courts.	0.71	Green
Number of Cleaning Hard Standing area (Asphalt)	Number of Cleansing of hard standing areas reported	8.14 (avg jobs)	N/A
Number of Fly-Tips	Number of Fly-Tips reports in our Parks	218	N/A