

CULTURAL SERVICES PARKS AND OPEN SPACES SERVICE STANDARD POLICY

“Making South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit”

Corporate objectives

Important to the success of the District and delivery of services are:

- People
- Place
- Progress
- Outcomes

Through continual improvement of our services, we will deliver connected communities and ensure that South Derbyshire continues to prosper.

Service aims

The service aims to promote and develop the district of South Derbyshire by offering enhanced opportunity for sport, health and physical, environmental and cultural activities for all people within the District. We directly provide services or partner with organisations that have suitable experience and expertise to enable us to:

- Support place-making and vibrant communities through the provision of cultural facilities and activities throughout the District
- Connect with our communities, helping them to feel safe and secure through community engagement, educational activities, cultural events
- Promote healthy lifestyles and increase levels of participation in sport, events, environmental and physical activities.

What we do

The Council is responsible for the management of open spaces including planning advice, adoption of new land, dealing with Section 106 agreements and commuted sums. In relation to the maintenance of open spaces, our services comprise:

- Parks and public open spaces including sports grounds
- Tree management
- Cemeteries
- Play areas and skate parks

Parks and public open spaces including sports grounds

We manage three large urban parks covering an area of approximately 15 hectares, together with the 30 hectare urban forest park of Swadlincote Woodlands. Public open space occupies an area in the region of 60 hectares, with 11 football pitches, eight allotment sites and large areas of common land.

With regard to the grounds maintenance service we will ensure that-

Green Flag Sites

- Green Flag Award Status is achieved for Eureka and Maurice Lea Parks
- Green Flag parks have an on-site park-keeper
- Bowling greens are cut on 76 occasions during the mowing season
- Amenity grass is mown on 26 occasions during the mowing season (approx. weekly)
- Ornamental hedges are cut twice per annum, outside the March to September period if there are nesting birds
- Shrub borders are pruned carefully according to the requirements of each species/cultivar
- Seasonal floral features, beds and borders etc. are maintained for optimum display
- Hard surfaces and areas designated as potential problem weed areas are treated twice per year with suitable weed control treatment
- Litter is collected daily and bins are checked daily and emptied as required
- Hard surface areas are swept weekly
- Leaves are cleared as part of appropriate routine operational tasks
- Full support is given for the Festival of Leisure, Remembrance Sunday and other major events
- A wide range of events and activities are delivered which engage local communities

All Other Sites

- Amenity grass is mown on 16 occasions during the mowing season (approx. fortnightly)
- Hedges are cut, as a minimum, annually outside the March to September bird-nesting season
- Shrub beds are pruned as required, at least annually
- Seasonal floral features, beds and borders etc. are maintained for optimum display through the year
- Litter is collected as a minimum twice per week in winter and three times in summer and bins are emptied at the same time and frequency
- Hard surface areas are swept weekly
- Leaves are cleared as part of appropriate routine operational tasks
- Sports pitches are repaired, maintained and marked out as required for each sport
- A fair allotments lettings and management service is provided and waste disposal facilities are provided on each site
- Natural open space woodlands and wildlife sites are managed to enhance biodiversity and provide recreational and educational opportunities for all

Tree management

In common with all other local authorities South Derbyshire District Council owns, and therefore is required to properly manage, a large number of trees and woodlands of various types and sizes. These trees are valued for their multi-functional contribution to the quality of life of the district, including place-making, public health, biodiversity, aesthetic value etc. and the Council has put in place policies, systems and resources to protect and manage them effectively.

The Council manages around twenty-five thousand trees and over 50 hectares of woodland throughout the district, with more being adopted each year.

With regard to the grounds maintenance service, we will ensure that:

- There is programme to map and add all our trees to the Council's tree stock inventory
- Trees are regularly inspected according to the Tree Management and Maintenance Policy
- All necessary work to make safe all trees is identified on a programme of work according to the Tree Management and Maintenance Policy on the following basis-
 - Priority 1 Immediate:- within 24 hours
 - Priority 2 Urgent Public Safety:- up to one month
 - Priority 3 Essential:- within six months
 - Priority 4 Urgent Tree Health:- within six months
 - Priority 5 Desirable:- within twelve months
- The tree work programme is completed to the required standard within the set timescales

Cemeteries and closed churchyards

We provide cemeteries at Aston-on-Trent, Church Gresley, Etwall, Findern, Marston-on-Dove and Newhall. Most of our cemeteries have consecrated (blessed as sacred) and unconsecrated areas where graves can be bought. SDDC will maintain the site without charge to the grave owner.

We also facilitate the grounds maintenance of a number of closed churchyards

With regard to the grounds maintenance service we will ensure that-

- The register and records for all cemeteries are properly maintained and updated
- Dignified and respectful bereavement services are delivered, including grave digging, health and safety supervision and providing public witness duties
- Amenity grass is mown on 16 occasions during the mowing season (approx. fortnightly)
- Hedges are cut, as a minimum, annually outside the March to September bird-nesting season
- Shrub beds are pruned as required, at least annually
- Seasonal floral features, beds and borders etc. are maintained for optimum display through the year
- Memorials are inspected for safety on a five-year rolling programme
- At Church Gresley and Newall Cemeteries:
 - Litter is collected as a minimum twice per week in winter and three times in summer and bins are emptied at the same time and frequency
 - Hard surface areas are swept weekly
 - Leaves are cleared as part of appropriate routine operational tasks
- Other cemeteries have their own maintenance arrangements

Play areas and skate parks

We have more than 50 play areas across South Derbyshire, catering for a wide range of age groups. Our playgrounds strike a balance between providing a stimulating learning environment and meeting safety requirements. We also manage and maintain three skate parks, in Peacroft Lane, Hilton, at Newhall Park and on Common Road, Swadlincote. All are free to use.

With regard to the grounds maintenance service we will ensure that-

- All new facilities are designed for optimum play value and are installed correctly
- Play equipment, skate parks, youth facilities, artificial sports areas are regularly inspected, repaired, maintained and kept clean and fit for purpose
- Full records are kept of inspection and maintenance programmes

Measuring our performance

Throughout our work, we set clear targets and measure our achievement through a suite of key performance indicators as part of an integrated performance management framework.

We do this through:

- Quality monitoring of service delivery and 'mystery shopping' of key sites
- The development of site management plans and improvement action plans
- The effective management of open spaces including infrastructure, trees, grounds maintenance and community involvement