

Streetscene Grounds Maintenance Contract Performance Update (March – October 2013)

- 1.1 Following a procurement exercise the streetscene grounds maintenance contract was awarded to Continental Landscapes Ltd (CLL) with effect from 1st January 2012.
- 1.2 The management of the contract became the responsibility of Parks and Countryside with effect from the 1st September 2012 soon after the service transferred directorates. This enabled improvements to the management of the contract by integrating staff into an existing team which already had considerable knowledge and expertise of horticultural maintenance as well as the management and delivery of grounds maintenance contracts.
- 1.3 From April 2013 the service took over budget management responsibility from the former ALMOs and highways along with undertaking monitoring activity and responding to customer enquiries and complaints.
- 1.4 The contract includes highway verges and incidental land around social housing.
- 1.5 Importantly, the specification requires the contractor to undertake litter removal from sites as part of horticultural management operations supporting the council's wider efforts to maintain clean neighbourhoods.

Table 1: Asset breakdown of contract items for the Outer North East Area

Asset Type	Annual Visits	Unit	Total Quantity
Amenity grass	14	M ²	568,217
Premium grass	28	M ²	40,382
Arterial routes	6	M ²	40,813
Sight Line & Rough Linear	3	M	288,675
Rough grass area	3	M ²	65,502
Shrub and rose beds	4	M ²	6,702
Hedges	3	M	6,067

- 1.6 Following an assessment of performance during the first year of operation, the frequency was increased during 2013 from 2 to 4 visits on shrub and rose beds. These changes aim to address concerns with the levels of weed growth and litter evident between visits. The following tables provide a summary of contract performance from March to the end of October 2013 to reflect the grass cutting season:

Table 2: Percentage of scheduled operations completed for each type of asset (March to October 2013)

Asset Type	%
Amenity grass	99.5%
Premium grass	99.1%

Arterial routes	83.3%
Sight Line & Rough Linear	93%
Rough grass area	71.6%
Shrub and rose beds	98%
Hedges	97.2%

- 1.7 It should be noted that approximately 1 cut was missed on rough grass areas and linear grass in the areas due to equipment failure.

Table 3: Customer Enquiries and Complaints (March to October)

Type of enquiry or complaint	Number 2012	Number 2013	% Change
Quality issues relating to operation undertaken	131	96	-26.7%
Streetscene land not maintained by the contract	38	27	-28.9%
Advice on related horticultural issues	24	14	-41.7%
Health and safety incidents and accidents	12	4	-66.7%

Scrutiny

- 1.8 An update report was considered by the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board during October 2013 that identified progress against recommendations made including the increased frequency of operations, established consultation with members on shrub bed removal, additional works being delivered by the contractor improving skill retention, and improved arrangements for contract management. It was agreed that a further update would be considered in autumn 2014.