

Environmental Maintenance Service Standards

**Neighbourhoods and Customer Services
Corporate Resources Directorate**



March 2018

V5

This document should be read in conjunction with the annual neighbourhood maintenance plans

Introduction

Redcar & Cleveland is a Borough of huge contrasts and diversity, with some of England's key features all in one Borough. There are areas of outstanding natural landscapes, an industrial heritage and powerhouse, a fine mix of towns and villages and many amazing people. Covering over 96 square miles, it is the largest Borough in the Tees Valley and has its third highest population at around 135,000.

The Council is committed to providing clean, safe and attractive neighbourhoods and this document sets out the standards you can expect in relation to environmental maintenance across the Borough.

The Council is responsible for maintaining seafronts, parks, open spaces, cemeteries and roadside verges including grass cutting, litter picking, sweeping and general street cleansing. They maintain land that the Council has responsibility for and do not maintain private land or land owned by bodies such as housing association, businesses and home owners. It is the landowner's responsibility for the upkeep of these areas.

However, the Council does have a close working relationship with Coast and Country Housing and in order to get the best out of all available resources they sometimes share grass cutting responsibilities i.e. arrangements are in place where the Council will cut some of Coast and Country Housing land and they will cut some of the Council land. Typically this would be in areas where a small patch of Coast and Country Housing land is surrounded by Council Land so it makes sense for the Council to cut it instead of sending a grass cutter out of the way to do it and vice versa.

Grass Cutting Standards - Estates

Grass cutting is programmed throughout the growing season to agreed target dates between March and October. The target dates are set out for the year and the details are held within the Neighbourhood Maintenance Plans. The Council will endeavour to hit these dates subject to factors outside of its control such as adverse weather or mechanical breakdown. If they experience such events and it impacts on their annual programme they will reschedule and where appropriate allocate additional resources to get back on target.

General amenity grass and open spaces (including grass verges) are cut approximately every 15 working days with a ride on grass cutter and they are followed by a 'clean up' team who follow the grass cutters with a strimmer, back pack blower and where necessary weed spraying equipment. They will strim around obstacles such as lamp columns and street furniture if there is any regrowth and spray off any weeds, they will also blow grass clippings off the pavements back onto the grass.

The Council will use chemical herbicide to treat grass/weeds around trees, obstacles, fences, along walls and road signs to reduce the need for strimming and to control the visual appearance of grass growth around fixtures

The Council allow grass clippings from open spaces to naturally break down on the grass surface as it is more environmental friendly, hence clippings are not collected after cutting. It would also have significant implications on grass cutting timescales as well as the additional cost to remove and dispose of grass clippings from across the Borough.

Ornamental lawn areas including sustainable beds in the Council's principal parks and other key features across the borough may have an enhanced maintenance regime which includes removing grass clippings and lawn edging. These enhanced standards are set out in the Neighbourhood Maintenance Plans.

Litter picking routes will be coordinated where appropriate to take place before grass cutting to prevent litter being shredded by the grass cutters



Weed Treatment Standards

The Council use chemical herbicide to treat grass/weeds around trees, obstacles, fences, along walls and road signs to reduce the need for strimming and to control grass growth around fixtures. It is also applied to footpath surfaces and roadside channels.

The Council use quad bikes to get maximum coverage in the time available and this will be supported by manual spot spraying using back packs where necessary. Weed spraying operations are currently carried out across the Borough during the following periods (depending on prevailing weather conditions).

- Obstacles, walls and fence lines. Footpaths and roadside channels (gutters) - three applications per year in:
 - February to April
 - May to August
 - August to November

*Additional application may be carried out where necessary to prevent regrowth

Use of chemical herbicides

The use of chemical herbicides is carefully controlled by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). All commercially available chemicals have been subject to rigorous testing and approved for sale by DEFRA. In addition, chemicals have been subject to a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment, leading to the development of specific procedures for the use of the chemical so that any risk to human health is eliminated. Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council have trained individual members of staff in the application of this chemical and only licensed members of the team can carry out the work.

The chemical herbicide used by the Council is based on a substance called glyphosate, which kills the majority of vegetation after approximately 15 days of the application. Glyphosate has an extremely low toxicity to animals and poses minimal risk to humans who may accidentally come into contact with the substance.

Clean up after chemical treatment

After spraying footpaths and roads the Council will follow up with a programme of cleaning up dead weeds that are too long to be left to break down naturally. These programmes are set out in the Neighbourhood Maintenance Plans under Sweeping Routes.



Principal Road Grass Verge Maintenance Standards

There are a number of key gateways into Redcar & Cleveland and it is important to make a good first impression to encourage more visitors to the Borough.

Grass cutting on the Boroughs high speed principal roads is undertaken as part of our cyclical and routine maintenance (Subject to weather conditions). The cut frequency will depend upon location and need. The Principal Roads include the following roads A66 from Cargo Fleet Lane roundabout to Westgate roundabout, A1053 Tees Dock Road, A174 between Greystones roundabout to Redcar Lane/Grewgrass Lane and also from Grewgrass Lane to Quarry Lane. A171 Swans Corner to Waterfall Kennel roundabout and Birkbrow. A1085 (Trunk Road) from Westgate roundabout to Kirkleatham Lane.

Maintenance includes verges, central reservations and roundabouts and the schedule of Works will include:

1. All verges, splitter islands, and roundabouts to be litter picked
2. All obstacles to be inspected for weed growth and treatment applied accordingly
3. All verges, splitter islands, and roundabouts to have grass cut
4. All signs to be checked and cleaned accordingly
5. All carriageways, splitter islands to be swept

Safety is paramount and the Council must ensure the safety of the staff carrying out any work and also road users and members of the general public who may be close to the highway. The principal road maintenance programme is carried out in a safe manner and as such the Council work to safe working policies in line with appropriate national guidance.

When working on dual carriageway high speed roads one lane of traffic will be closed off at a time to ensure safety. Working with the specialist supplier, who deliver traffic management on behalf of the Council, lane closures will be kept to a minimum to reduce any disruption. The lane will be closed off as close as possible to the time of doing the work and it will be reopened as soon as the work has been completed. Temporary road signs will be laid flat in preparation for the closure of the 2nd lane the following day and they will be removed the day that the full job has been completed.



Shrub Maintenance Standards

Shrub beds will be given a major maintenance visit in the winter months from November to March; any major pruning and clearance of debris and unwanted vegetation will happen at this time. At this time the Council will spade edge the grassed perimeter of the shrub bed to keep it tidy and unified. Subject to bird nesting season.

During the spring and summer shrub beds will be visited to control growth that is causing a physical obstruction, to control excessive weed growth and remove accumulated debris. In this instance the Council will prune the shrub back to the confines of the bed to keep it off the highway and footpath.

Chemical weed control will be put on the beds between March and October to hold back weed growth. Rubbish is cleared as part of our winter bed maintenance rounds when any detritus will be removed and adjacent paths swept.

Low Maintenance Hedge and Grass Verges - Maintenance Standards

The Council have an agreed contract with a service provider to cover the operations regarding low maintenance grass and hedge cutting across the borough. This involves an annual cut of Council hedges and grass verges leading in and out of the Boroughs rural towns and villages. It also includes some of the urban areas. The Council has entered into this contract due to the specialist machinery that is required to undertake this work.

The contractors will litter pick before any grass cutting takes place and they will be responsible for traffic management associated with the operation of the contract. Any necessary lane closures will be kept to a minimum to reduce any disruption. The lane will be closed off as close as possible to the time of doing the work and it will be reopened as soon as the work has been completed. Temporary road signs will be removed the day that the full job has been completed.

Tree Maintenance

For information relating to the Councils Tree Strategy please visit the Council web site <http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk> and view the Tree Care & Management page to find the following document 'Our Trees & Woodland Strategy 2013-2018'



Flower Bed Maintenance Standards

The Council are working on replacing seasonal flower beds with all-weather perennial plants. This will eliminate the need to purchase plants and replace them twice each year, it will also reduce maintenance as the teams will not have to strip and prepare the beds for each new batch.

The Council are also reviewing possible locations for changing grassed areas into wildflower meadows to attract wildlife, improve appearance and reduce the need for maintenance.



Street Cleansing Standards

The Council as a principal litter authority has a legal duty under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to ensure that the relevant highway (footway and carriageway) and relevant land are kept clear of litter and refuse.

Street cleansing primarily involves the cleaning of carriageways, footpaths, public spaces, removal of graffiti and fly-posting, removing dog foul, cleaning street furniture and cleaning seafront locations across the borough, along with the collection of litter and removal of detritus on land over which the Council has a responsibility

In order to be proactive the Council has a programme for each of the following as set out in the Neighbourhood Maintenance Plans:

- Mechanical Road Sweeping
 - Seafronts and key visitor locations will be swept daily
 - Key roads into the Town Centre will be swept weekly
 - Main routes in the Borough will be swept monthly
 - Other Council Highways including estate roads will be swept on a quarterly basis i.e. every 3 months
- Barrow Person routes (including, litter picking, manual removal of weeds, removal of dog foul and graffiti removal)
- Emptying litter/dog bins

What we will do in addition

- Respond (by inspection) to complaints of roads falling below standard within ten working days.
- Respond to (including working with the enforcement team) fly-tipping on public land within ten working days of being reported.
- Respond to reports of overflowing litter bins within 24 hours.
- Ensure offensive graffiti is removed/covered within 24 hours and non-offensive graffiti within ten working days. (Council owned land and property)
- Remove dead animals from the public highway and Council owned public open space within 24 hours of being reported and notify owners if possible.



Seafront Cleaning Standards

Seafront locations are important visitor attractions and they are also enjoyed and loved by local residents too. Significant investment has been made regenerating Redcar seafront with critical sea defence works being carried out by the Environment Agency to protect and secure people's homes and businesses against the risk of coastal flooding and coastal erosion.

The Council took the opportunity to work in partnership with the Environment Agency to revamp 2.7km of the promenade area, from Coatham to the eastern end of The Stray to enhance the seafront for residents and increase visitor numbers. A total of £30m has been invested by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and the Environment Agency to make it all happen.

It is crucial that the Council ensure this area is maintained to a high standard and that it is an attractive place to live work and visit. To this end they have developed a maintenance programme which is set out in the Neighbourhood Maintenance Plans. They will ensure the following:

Redcar

| Redcar - Summer Maintenance (March to September) | |
|---|----------------------|
| Maintenance Item | Frequency |
| Litter Pick | Daily |
| Empty Bins | Daily |
| Litter Pick Shrub Bed | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep | Daily |
| Jet Wash Shelter | Daily |
| Jet Wash Revetments | 3 times per week |
| Entrance to Beach Inspection/Cleaned | Daily |
| Redcar Beacon Area | Daily |
| Graffiti Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Fly Posting Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Manual Litter picking Beach | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep Car Parks | Weekly |
| Mechanical Beach Cleaning | 3 times per week |
| Seats/Picnic Benches Inspected & Cleaned | Daily |
| Slipways cleaned and inspected | Weekly |
| Fencing/railing inspection | Weekly |
| Sand removal from path/ highway | As and when required |
| Spray Path (Weed treatment) | Every 2 Months |
| Grass Maintenance | 15 Working Days |
| Strim Obstacles Fence and Wall Edges | 15 Working Days |
| Spray Shrub Bed | March/April |

| Redcar - Winter Maintenance (October to February) | |
|--|----------------------|
| Maintenance Item | Frequency |
| Litter Pick | Daily |
| Empty Bins | Daily |
| Litter Pick Shrub Bed | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep | Daily |
| Jet Wash Shelter | Weekly |
| Jet Wash Revetments | Weekly |
| Entrance to Beach Inspection/Cleaned | Weekly |
| Redcar Beacon Area | Daily |
| Graffiti Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Fly Posting Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep Car Parks | Weekly |
| Litter picking Beach | Weekly |
| Seats/Picnic Benches Inspected & Cleaned | Daily |
| Slipways cleaned and inspected | Weekly |
| Fencing/railing inspection | Weekly |
| Spray Path (Weed treatment) | As and when required |
| Sand removal from path/ highway | As and when required |

Saltburn

| Saltburn - Summer Maintenance (March to September) | |
|--|-----------------|
| Maintenance Item | Frequency |
| Litter Pick | Daily |
| Empty Bins | Daily |
| Litter Pick Shrub Bed | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep | Weekly |
| Entrance to Beach Inspection/Cleaned | Daily |
| Graffiti Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Fly Posting Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Litter picking Beach | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep Car Parks | Weekly |
| Slipways cleaning and inspection | Weekly |
| Fencing/railing inspection | Weekly |
| Spray Path (Weed treatment) | Every 2 Months |
| Seats/Picnic Benches Inspected & Cleaned | Daily |
| Grass Maintenance | 15 Working Days |
| Strim Obstacles Fence and Wall Edges | 15 Working Days |
| Spray Shrub Bed | In March/April |

| Saltburn - Winter Maintenance (October to February) | |
|---|----------------------|
| Maintenance Item | Frequency |
| Litter Pick | Daily |
| Empty Bins | Daily |
| Litter Pick Shrub Bed | Daily |
| Mechanical Sweep | Weekly |
| Entrance to Beach Inspection/Cleaned | Weekly |
| Graffiti Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Fly Posting Inspection/Removal | Daily |
| Litter picking Beach | Weekly |
| Mechanical Sweep Car Parks | Weekly |
| Slipways cleaning and inspection | Weekly |
| Fencing/railing inspection | Weekly |
| Spray Path (Weed treatment) | As and when required |

Other Beach locations

Beaches outside of central Redcar and Saltburn such as Marske, The Stray, and Skinningrove will be inspected on a weekly basis where any issues will be recorded and appropriate action taken.



Winter Maintenance Standards

The Council's corporate aim is to provide an effective and efficient winter maintenance service within the Borough boundaries, with the resources available, which means:

- Helping to ensure the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians
- Aiming to minimise delays due to winter weather
- Ensuring winter maintenance operations are undertaken safely
- Maintaining robust and continuous communication channels for local residents

At the Neighbourhood Level, this service is operational from October through to mid-April. The Neighbourhood Team delivers supplementary services which include:

- Clearing/salting/gritting footways
- Treat locations to assist Waste Services in completing household waste and recycling collections.
- Providing and replenishing salt bins during adverse weather events
- Salting/gritting estate roads in assistance to normal winter maintenance operations

Each of the three Neighbourhoods (Coastal, Guisborough and East Cleveland and Greater Eston) has created a list of priority locations in relation to snow clearing in the event of heavy snowfall. These priority locations will start with high footfall locations, doctors, hospitals and pharmacies. Shopping areas, areas identified as high senior citizen residency, selected bus stops, and school crossing points.



Neighbourhood Safety Inspection Standards

Play areas

The Council have a number of play areas across the Borough and they are inspected regularly to ensure they are safe for use.

During an inspection the Council will review the condition of the play area at the time of inspection, taking into consideration the safety of the site, suitability and conditions of ancillary items, suitability and condition of equipment and suitability and condition of ground surfacing. The Inspector will take into account events such as weather conditions, usage, or vandalism that may affect the condition of the play area.

Play areas are categorised into 3 groups according to frequency of inspection visits. The most frequently used play areas such as the playground in Locke Park and other play areas that are in key visitor locations are placed into category 1 and they will receive a minimum of 5 inspections per week. Category 2 play areas will be inspected a minimum of 3 times per week and category 3 play areas will be inspected a minimum of once per week.

Highway Safety Inspections

Highway Safety Inspections are intended to identify defects, which are likely to create a danger or serious inconvenience to users of the highway network or the wider community and therefore require attention.

Unless urgent action is required, the Inspector's course of action shall be to issue works tickets for repairs to the footway or carriageway or pass on the relevant information to the section or department which is responsible for overseeing that particular activity if not on the adopted highway.

In addition there are other works undertaken by third parties, which are clearly their responsibility. It is the responsibility of the Inspector, wherever practicable, to ensure that the third parties are aware of any problem and undertake all necessary remedial action to resolve the problem. If the third party is known and unwilling or unable to rectify the problem, any costs incurred in remedial action shall be recharged to them accordingly.

This also applies to private forecourts open to public access. Highway Inspection records will indicate anything considered to be a hazard in such locations and actions taken noted. Records will refer to letters sent, responses received and checks on actions taken. In the event that the land owner fails to take appropriate action or the land is unregistered, Inspectors are required to consider powers available to them under the Highways Act 1980.

The following frequencies for Safety Inspections are based upon network hierarchies as outlined in Well Maintained Highways, the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management, and also take into account the following considerations:

- Category within the network hierarchy

- Traffic use, characteristics and trends
- Incident and inspection history
- Characteristics of adjoining network elements
- Local knowledge / expertise

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council has adopted the recommendations shown, which are in accordance with the Code of Practice.

CARRIAGEWAY INSPECTION HIERARCHIES / FREQUENCIES

| Category | Hierarchy Description | General Description | Frequency |
|----------|-----------------------|---|-----------|
| 2 | Strategic Routes | Non Motorway Trunk and some principal "A" roads between primary destinations. | 1 Month |
| 3a | Main Distributor | Major Urban Network and Inter-Primary Links. Short – medium distance traffic. | 1 Month |
| 3b | Secondary Distributor | Classified Road (B & C class) and unclassified urban bus routes carrying local traffic with frontage access and frequent junctions. | 1 Month |
| 4a | Link Road | Roads linking between Main and Secondary Distributor Network with frontage access and frequent junctions. | 3 Months |
| 4b | Local Access Road | Roads serving limited number of properties carrying only access traffic. | 6 Months |

FOOTWAY INSPECTION HIERARCHIES / FREQUENCIES

| Category | Hierarchy Description | General Description | Frequency |
|----------|-------------------------|---|-----------|
| 1a | Prestige Walking Zone | Prestige Areas in towns and cities with exceptionally high usage, such as Prince's Street, Edinburgh. | 1 Month |
| 1 | Primary Walking Route | Busy urban shopping and business areas, and main pedestrian routes linking interchanges between different modes of transport, such as railways and bus stops etc. | 1 Month |
| 2 | Secondary Walking Route | Medium usage routes through local areas feeding primary routes, local shopping centres, large schools and industrial centres etc. | 3 Months |
| 3 | Link Footway | Linking local access footways through urban areas and busy rural footways. To Include flagged Local Access Footways. | 6 Months |
| 4 | Local Access Footway | Footways associated with low usage, short estate roads to the main routes and cul-de-sac. | 6 Months |

CYCLEWAY INSPECTION HIERARCHIES / FREQUENCIES

| Category | Hierarchy Description | Description | General | Frequency |
|----------|-----------------------|--|---------|---|
| A | Cycle Lane | Cycle lane, forming part of the carriageway, commonly 1.5 metre strip adjacent to the nearside kerb. Cycle gaps at road closure point (exemptions for cycle access). | | As for appropriate carriageway category |
| B | Cycle Track | Shared cycle/pedestrian paths, either segregated by a white line or other physical segregation, or unsegregated. | | As for appropriate footway category |
| | | Cycle track, a route for cyclists not contiguous with the public footway or carriageway. | | 6 Months |



Supporting Events

The Council organise and manage a number of events throughout the year and they also support local community events.

The Council will support community groups with advice and information during the planning stages of any events and where necessary they will assist in the development of the Event Management Plan however, it is the responsibility of the event organiser to own the event management plan and have full control and understanding of the management and health and safety of the event.

The Council will also support events by providing community groups with tools such as litter pickers and gloves and they will also arrange to collect the rubbish that has been put into rubbish bags at the end of the event*.

If a group is planning an organised litter pick they will also provide rubbish bags.

*Charges may be applicable

