

## Update on Grounds Contract in Wickhambrook 2020 - 21

The Estates Committee reviewed the grounds contract for 2021-22 at its March meeting and resolved to appoint R.H.Landscapes & Maintenance Services Ltd for the current financial year (**Min. 21.03.09.2 refers**).

The quotes considered were, as far as possible, like for like, based on the understanding of the frequencies of cutting undertaken during the previous contract.

The first cut took place in April, and it has been acknowledged that there were some issues to be resolved, relating to:

- Access to gated areas
- Collection of grass cuttings in some areas
- Level of cuts

all of which have been discussed with the contractor following a site visit with the Clerk in late April. A number of adjustments to the contract were agreed as a result, including

- The inclusion of strimming of the small meeting green at no extra cost
- The exact delineation of the nunnery green cut
- That leavings at the Bury Road pocket park would be collected, and the area outside the fence strimmed; and
- That cutting of the old cemetery would be delayed by two to four weeks to allow for the spring flowering bulbs to set their seed

Due to an unusually wet and warm spring, the grass grew at speed, and it became apparent that the smaller greens, which were contracted for eight cuts a year, were likely to need more frequent cutting in the spring months. Accordingly, the clerk asked the contractor to increase the frequency of cuts to bi-monthly for the six weeks to end July when the situation would be reviewed.

The clerk has continued to liaise regularly with the contractor throughout the summer.

Over the June and July, a number of issues were resolved, namely:

- New keys cut for access on to All Saints Churchyard
- Confirmation from West Suffolk and Havebury as to the extent of the areas which they cut
- An additional cut and collection on the Recreation Ground and Six Acres arising from a poor third party cut (it has not been possible to establish who was responsible)
- A special cut of the verge opposite Croft close to facilitate access for a resident with mobility problems (verge the responsibility of Suffolk County Council).

Whilst it is acknowledged that there were issues and complaints relating to the quality of the cuts in the early part of the season, recent comments relating to the work have been positive and area summarised below:

### **Re Coltsfoot Green:**

*"As an aside the contractor has cut exactly the right area and made a good job of it".*

### **Re Wickhambrook Cemetery:**

*"Cemetery is looking really smart these days"*

### **Re All Saints Churchyard:**

*"the team are taking the work seriously, with better equipment and more men, sometimes they go a little fast"*

Hilary Workman  
Clerk & RFO  
July 2021

The clerk has further been able to establish, on subsequent advice from the former contractor, that greens were cut 16 times annually (information not previously made available), and the inclusion of some sites which the clerk had not been made aware of.

The Estates Committee at their August meeting authorised the cost of:

- a. Strimming of the outer banks of the recreation ground & six acres a maximum of two times in this current financial year at a cost £220.00 per visit;
- b. To cut the hedges around the bowling green, along the track next to the rec, the beech hedge near the car park and the hedge around the cemetery a maximum of two times in this current financial year at a cost of £395.00 + VAT per cut (**Min. EC.21.08.09.1.1 refers**);

and further resolved to:

approve the proposed revised specification for cuts and proposed areas set out at Appendices A & B, (subject to any changes agreed at the meeting) in advance of quotes being requested for the grounds contract for financial year 2022/23 (**Min. EC.21.08.91.1.2 refers**).

Some additional adjustment to the existing contract will also need to be made to reflect the proposed new specification and take account of the additional cuts which have been flexed in over the early spring months of this year. This is summarised at **Appendix A** to this report.

The anticipated increase in cost over quote (£7,400) for the current financial year, which makes provision for a further six cuts (includes September) is £2,180 (total £9580) against a total budget line for the grounds contract approved in January of £11,922.00 (all prices quoted ex VAT). A colder winter may result in a late November or early February cut not being necessary.

The clerk has further reviewed and adjusted the specification for the contract with respect to the 2022/23 season, for which quotes will be invited in early October. This revised specification is attached as **Appendix B** to this report, and updated plans at **Appendix C**.

It has also taken into account the advice of the existing contractor that, due to milder winters, 18 cuts should be considered to allow for eight months @ two cuts per month (March to October), and 2 months @ one cut per month (November and February).

The clerk is further proposing that future contracts should start at the beginning of the cutting season (March), which will ensure that, in the event of any change to contractor in the future, there is less likelihood of the March cuts not being undertaken.

A copy of the existing contract is attached as **Appendix D** to this report.

Recommendation:

**The parish council authorise:**

- i. **a further £2,180 plus VAT to cover the cost of the adjustment necessary to the grounds contract arising from the necessary additional cuts added to the schedule in the early spring months of the year;**
- ii. **increase the total amount approved under the List of Due Payments (Min. 21.03.11.7 refers) in respect of R H Landscapes and Maintenance to £9580 plus VAT;**
- iii. **Approve the proposed revised specification for cuts and proposed areas set out at Appendices A & B, (subject to any changes agreed at the meeting) in advance of quotes being requested for the grounds contract for financial year 2022/23 (Min. EC.21.08.91.1.2 refers);**

# Appendix A

	Cost per cut	Contract Cuts	Contract Cost	Flex to 16 Cuts	Cost to Flex to 16 cuts	Cuts to date (31/08)	Cost to date (31/08)	Anticipated Year End Cuts	Anticipated Year End Costs	Cost to Flex to 18 cuts	Notes
All Saints Churchyard	£ 85.00	8	£ 680.00	16	£ 1,360.00	9	£ 765.00	15	£ 1,275.00	£ 1,530.00	
Attleton Green	£ 35.00	8	£ 280.00	16	£ 560.00	9	£ 315.00	15	£ 525.00	£ 630.00	
Coltsfoot Green	£ 35.00	8	£ 280.00	16	£ 560.00	9	£ 315.00	15	£ 525.00	£ 630.00	
Meeting Green Verge	£ 35.00	8	£ 280.00	16	£ 560.00	9	£ 315.00	15	£ 525.00	£ 630.00	
Nunnery Green Verges	£ 40.00	8	£ 320.00	16	£ 640.00	9	£ 360.00	15	£ 600.00	£ 720.00	
Tennis Courts surrounding Grass			see below						£ -		
Cemetery and Memorial Garden - grass, hedges and leaf clearing	£ 100.00	16	£ 1,600.00	16	£ 1,600.00	11	£ 1,100.00	16	£ 1,600.00	£ 1,800.00	*one tree cut as early season parts of cemetery not cut for seed setting and same cut fee charged
Bowling Green (in and outer banks), leaves & debris collected	£ 45.00	16	£ 720.00	16	£ 720.00	9	£ 405.00	15	£ 675.00	£ 810.00	
Bury Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	£ 35.00	8	£ 280.00	16	£ 560.00	10	£ 350.00	16	£ 560.00	£ 630.00	
Cemetery Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	£ 35.00	16	£ 560.00	16	£ 560.00	11	£ 385.00	17	£ 595.00	£ 630.00	
Outer banks of Recreation Field - 3 times annually @ £220.00			see below		£ 880.00					£ 660.00	weren't included in the contract
Other hedges (cut one side) bowling green, along the track next to the rec, the beech hedge near the car park and the hedge around the cemetery 2 times annually			see below		£ 790.00					£ 790.00	weren't included in the contract
Recreation Ground & Six Acres (including in and outer banks of recreation field & tennis courts surrounding grass)	£ 150.00	16	£ 2,400.00	16	£ 2,400.00	11	£ 1,650.00	18	£ 2,700.00	£ 2,700.00	Outer banks have not been cut and quoted separately
Village Hall			n/a								
Footpaths per plan			n/a								
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 595.00</b>		<b>£ 7,400.00</b>		<b>£ 11,190.00</b>		<b>£ 5,960.00</b>		<b>£ 9,580.00</b>	<b>£ 12,160.00</b>	
									£ 2,180.00		

Plan Reference		No. Cuts	Collect Arisings	Leaf Clearing	Notes
	<b>Greens</b>				
1	Attleton Green	18	No		leave small triangle at rear for wildflower colonisation
2	Coltsfoot Green	18	No		strim down into all culverts
3	Meeting Green Verge & Triangle	18	No		small triangle must be trimmed to ensure visibility
4	Nunnery Green Verges	18			verges uneven, take time in dips to obtain even cut
	<b>Cemetery &amp; Churchyard</b>				
5	All Saints Churchyard	18	No		Only in Churchyard, not verges or car park
6	Cemetery and Memorial Garden	18		yes	Delay cuts where bee orchids indicated, or to allow spring flowers to set seed, as agreed with contractor
	<b>Play Areas</b>				
7	Bury Road Play Area	18	yes	yes	
8	Cemetery Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	18	yes	yes	
	<b>Six Acres &amp; Recreation Ground</b>				
9	Bowling Green (in and outer banks)	18	yes	yes	not the bowling green itself
10	Tennis Courts surrounding Grass	18			
11	Inner banks of Recreation Field and Six Acres	18			
12	Recreation Ground & Six Acres	18			cut one side
	<b>Other</b>				
13	Footpaths per plan	8			
14	Outer banks of Recreation Field and Six Acres	3			strim/brushcut - note steep banks
15	Village Hall	16			
16	Hedges - bowling green, along the track next to the rec, the beech hedge near the car park (cut one side) and the hedge around the cemetery cut hedges both sides on road & one side elsewhere.	2			





Grass Cutting

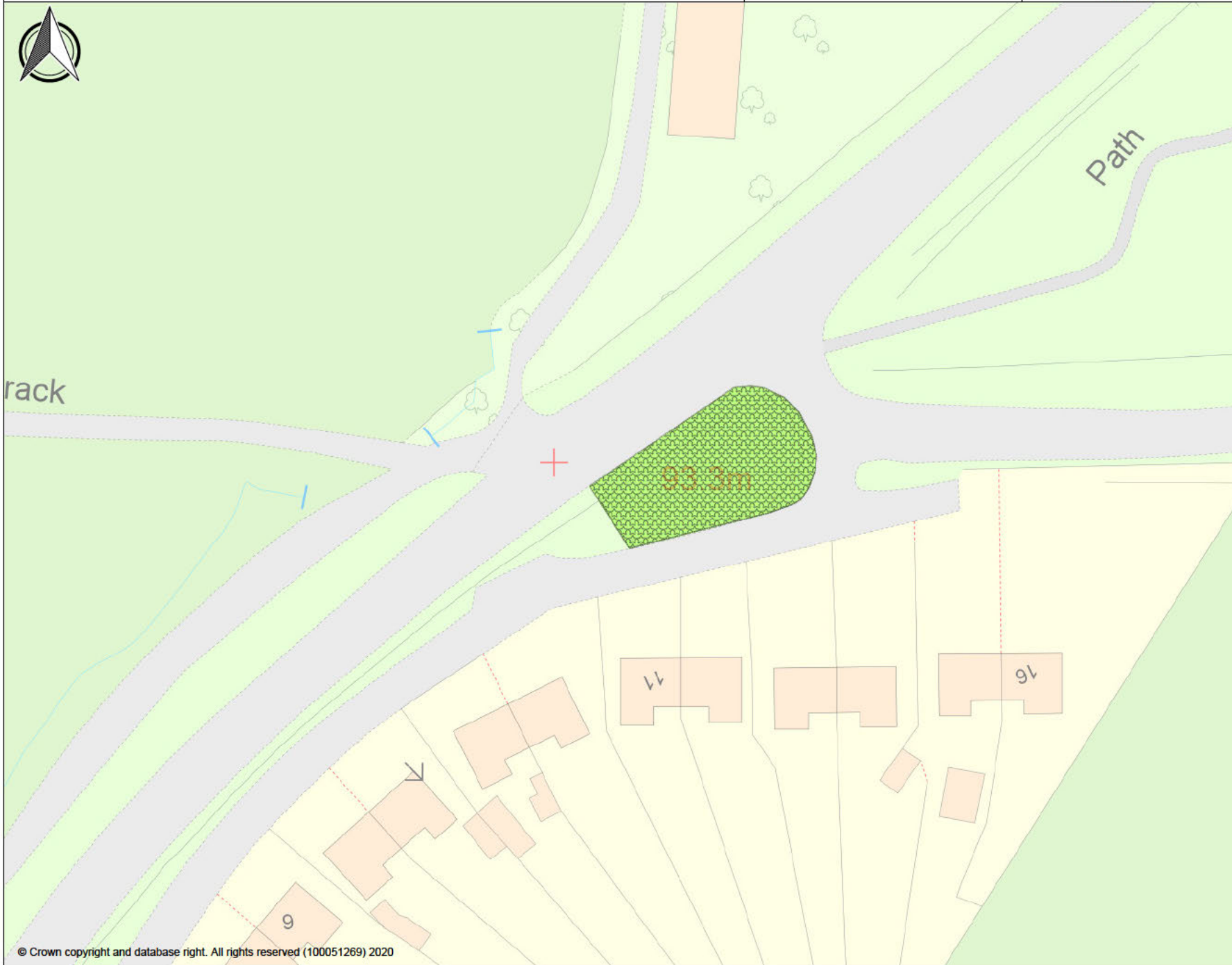




Grass Cutting



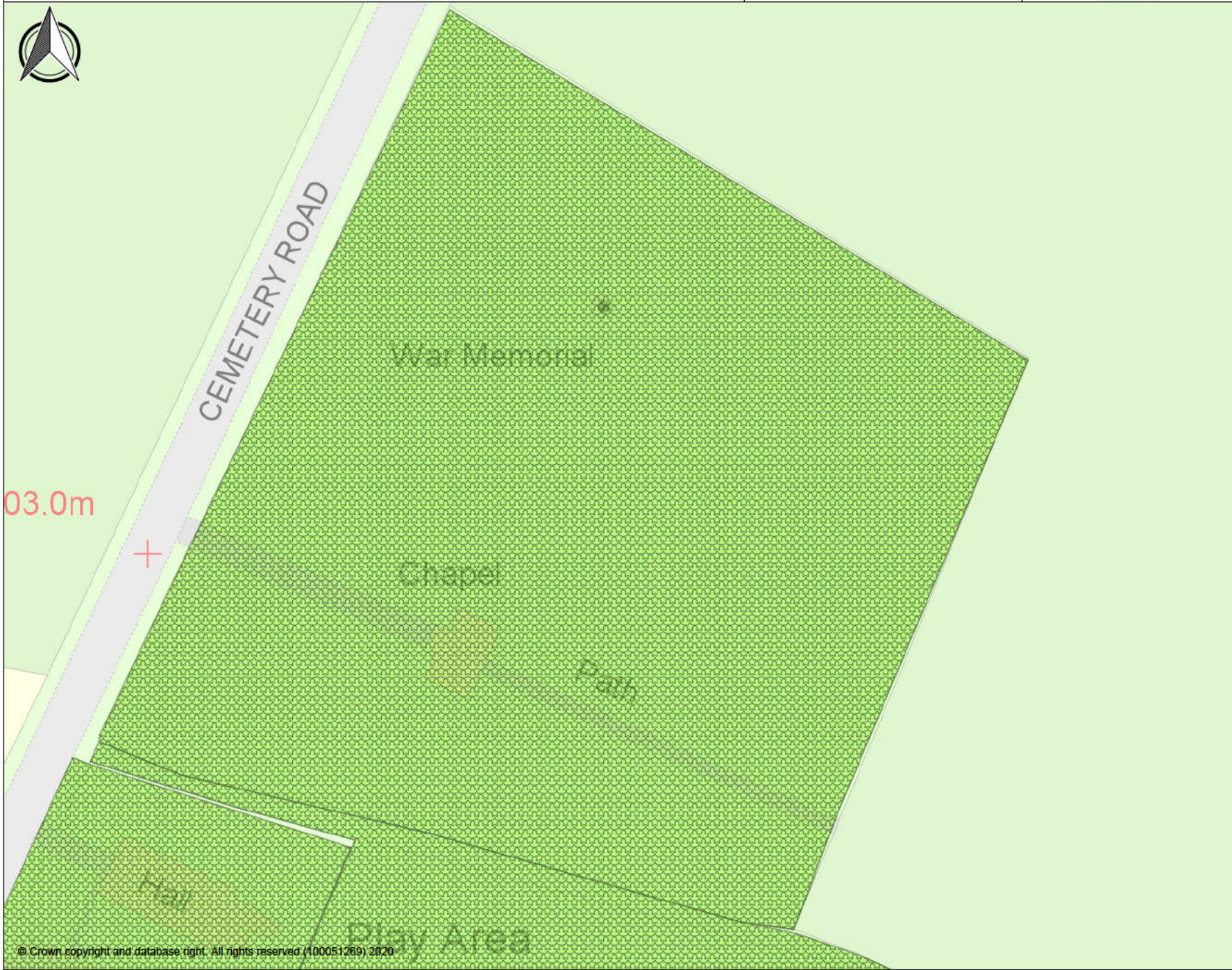




Grass Cutting



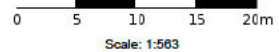




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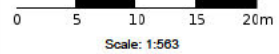




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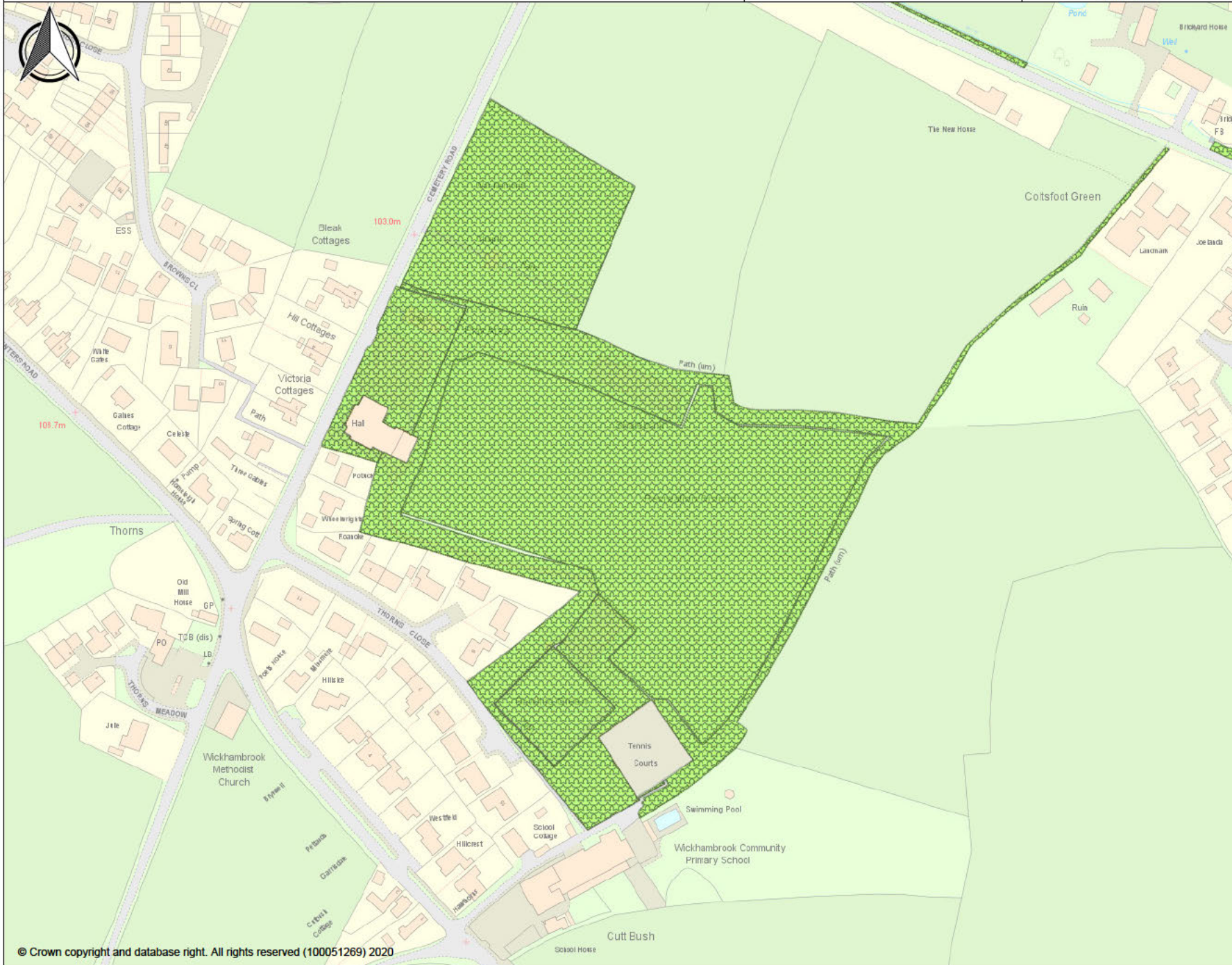




Grass Cutting



Grass Cutting





# Wickhambrook Parish Council

## TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT FOR GRASS CUTTING CONTRACTOR

- 1. Period** March 2021 - March 2022
- 2. Employer** Wickhambrook Parish Council
- 3. Contractor** R H Landscapes & Maintenance Services Ltd
- 4. Details of works** The following areas will be **cut, strimmed** and leaves and debris collected:

<b>Area</b>	<b>No. Occasions</b>
All Saints Churchyard	8
Attleton Green	8
Coltsfoot Green	8
Meeting Green Verge	8
Nunnery Green Verges	8
Cemetery and Memorial Garden - grass, hedges and leaf clearing	16
Bowling Green (in and outer banks) – cut	16
Leaves & debris collected	4
Bury Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	8
Cemetery Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	16
Recreation Ground & Six Acres (including inner banks of recreation field & tennis courts surrounding grass)	16

### Frequency of cuts

Grass will be cut at regular intervals, depending on the weather

### Strimming

The areas should be strimmed within 48 hours of each cut as required to ensure that the areas remain tidy.

**Length of grass:** The grass should be cut to a length of 3 - 4 inches.

### Equipment

The contractor should have sufficient equipment to allow the grass to be maintained under all weather conditions. In particular they will need a flail or a gang mower so that the cuttings are not generally visible

**Spraying Licence**

Pesticides should not be used without specific agreement from Wickhambrook Parish Council on the areas, frequency and pesticide used. Any agreement would be subject to RH Landscaping and Maintenance holding the relevant pesticide spraying licence.

**5. Terms All prices are subject to VAT @ the prevailing rate**

	<b>R H Landscapes</b>
All Saints Churchyard	£ 680.00
Attleton Green	£ 280.00
Coltsfoot Green	£ 280.00
Meeting Green Verge	£ 280.00
Nunnery Green Verges	£ 320.00
Cemetery and Memorial Garden - grass, hedges and leaf clearing	£ 1,600.00
Bowling Green (in and outer banks), leaves & debris collected	£ 720.00
Bury Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	£ 280.00
Cemetery Road Play Area - leaves & debris collected	£ 560.00
Recreation Ground & Six Acres (including inner banks of recreation field & tennis courts surrounding grass)	£ 2,400.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 7,400.00</b>

Any additional cuts agreed as necessary will be notified under a separate purchase order at the same rates.

**6. Inspection** A bi-monthly recorded quality inspection which may be a joint inspection with Wickhambrook Parish Council.

**7. Payment** Payment will be made on receipt of an invoice.

**8. Acts and regulations** The contractor will comply with current health and safety regulations

**9. Insurance** The contractor shall maintain full public liability insurance for not less than £5,000,000 and indemnify Wickhambrook Parish Council against any expense, liability, loss, claim or proceedings whatsoever arising under any statute of common law in respect of personal injury to or death of any person whomsoever arising out of or in the course of or caused by the carrying out of the works.

Signed on behalf of Wickhambrook Parish Council: .....

Signed by the contractor: .....  
[Redacted Signature]

Date: .....  
[Redacted Date]