

Onward
Creating positive spaces

YOUR
ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES

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About your service.

Our purpose is to make a positive difference in the communities we serve.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing an efficient, professional and value for money service
- Maintaining, managing and improving the green spaces in our care.
- Responding quickly and effectively to customer needs and feedback

This handbook is designed to give you clear and transparent standards for your environmental services and also includes the ways we monitor and measure how well standards are being achieved how we track your satisfaction with our service.

We will strive to meet these standards on every one of our sites.

Ian Hulme
Environmental Services Manager





Grassed areas.

20 visits per year: 16 cuts per year from March – October with 4 winter visits. Other areas may be cut to different frequencies (for example meadow cuts)

- During the growing season grass is cut on a twice-monthly cycle. We aren't able to tell you the exact dates but scheduled visits will fall into either the first and third week of the month or the second and fourth
- All grass sites will be inspected and litter picked before mowing
- Once grass cutting has started on the property, we'll finish it, unless inclement weather occurs.
- Grass cutting machines will be suitable for the size of area being maintained.
- Mowers will be sharp, properly set and cut evenly and cleanly. The first mow of the season will be a 'topping cut' only.
- Obstacles and edges on estate sites will be treated with herbicide in spring to reduce strimming visits and maintain tidy edges
- The strimming of edges and obstacles will be completed at the same time as grass cutting
- We cut on a cut-and-drop basis using specialised mulch mowers. These mowers are environmenty friendly and feed the soil to promote better lawn health.
- All pathways and hard surfaces will be blown clean after mowing is completed



Shrub beds and hedges.

Shrubs pruned twice a year. Hedges one or two visits depending on species and growth. Restrictions due to bird nesting March - September.

- All planted areas will be kept free of weeds and litter. Weeds in beds and hedge bases will be spot sprayed with herbicide
- Pruning will be carried out according to the correct horticultural practice for the type of shrub. In all cases, self-seeded trees, dead, diseased and damaged material shall be removed
- Shrubs will be hard-pruned in winter and box-pruned or shaped during summer. All shrub-bed areas will be pruned twice within a 12 month period
- Hedges will be maintained so that there is no obstruction to footpaths, roads, windows, parking areas and sightlines.
- All hard pruning will be completed outside of the bird nesting season (March to August) if possible. Where pruning is necessary, a full and thorough check will be made for nests and work will be suspended if any are found
- After pruning all cuttings will be removed or mulched to the base of the shrubs
- Shrub beds will be edged off as part of programmed winter works for a neat and tidy appearance

Non-grassed areas.

Scheduled visits.

- Non-grassed areas include bin areas, bike sheds, car parks, surface water gullies, soakaways, yards
- All areas will be litter picked and cleared
- Hard surface areas will be kept weed and litter free as far as is practically possible. All sites will be maintained on the scheduled visit and any issues reported
- Herbicide will be used on all hard surface areas as required and applied to all areas in spring
- Moss will be sprayed before scraping and only be removed after it has died back. Moss is treated year-round

Invasive/non-native weeds

Onward has a legal obligation to control certain weed species on land it manages. Our Environmental Services Team will attend invasive weed sites and treat with herbicide to manage the infestation.

Japanese Knotweed

All sites are to be photographed at assessment stage and before each treatment.

The spread and vigour of the infestation is to be recorded each visit.

Neighbouring properties with Japanese Knotweed are to be reported.

All sites will be sprayed twice a year or as required to control spread.

Giant Hogweed

Giant Hogweed enquiries will be responded to immediately and, if verified, will be prioritised for treatment

All other enquiries of invasive weeds are to be reported to the management team for attention





Wildflower sites.

These important features provide valuable wildlife habitat. Management is minimal but needs timing correctly.

- All areas are to be litter picked prior to work being carried out
- Areas to be sprayed and strimmed after die back (September)
- All areas are to be sprayed and left to die off naturally. After die back, the area should be rotavated prior to seeding
- Areas are to be inspected on scheduled visits and cleared of litter or debris if required



Trees.

As part of the policy and management plan, all trees within our ownership are surveyed and risk assessed every three years. All identified maintenance works are carried out in accordance with B53998 standards.

Further information about Onward's arboricultural services can be found [here](#).

- Reports of windblown or immediately dangerous trees will be prioritised
- All tree work will be completed by trained, NPTC qualified arborists working to relevant industry guidelines
- Tree surveys and condition reports will only be undertaken by a qualified Tree Specialist
- Tree stumps are to be left at 500mm high in communal areas so as not to form trip-hazards. These stumps will be ground out when possible. Stumps in gardens will be ground out where possible and treated with herbicide if needed
- All debris from tree work will be removed from site
- Leaves will be removed or mulched from all communal areas as part of general grounds maintenance

Other services

We undertake a range of duties on estates, schemes and properties to keep them looking good.

These can include:

- investigating and removing fly tipping
- Communal cleaning
- Clearing fire escapes and safety routes
- Removing graffiti

Environmental Contractors.

Onward Environmental Services team also manage external contractors to deliver the following services:

- Communal cleaning
- Window cleaning
- Grounds maintenance

Contractors are checked and monitored routinely on a weekly basis for quality, productivity and safety. Each contractor attends a monthly meeting with Onward contract managers to discuss performance in these areas.

More information is available on specific contractors and contract management in your area - call us on **0300 555 0600**



Tell us how we're doing.

We're always looking to improve our services with the help of satisfaction surveys, resident feedback, inspections and learning from complaints.

If you have any feedback about your experience of our services, or suggestions for improvement, we'd love to hear from you. Email us at EST.feedback@onward.co.uk or call us on **0300 555 0600**

If you would like to give us regular feedback or work with us to improve our services, why not join our Customer Engagement community? Email us at customerengagement@onward.co.uk or call us on **0300 555 0600**

Making a complaint

We don't always get things right first time. If you do have any problems contact us straight away and we'll do our best to rectify the issue quickly.

If you believe our service really hasn't been up to standard, you can contact us in one of the following ways:

Online	via ' My Onward '
Over the phone	0300 555 0600
Email	EST.feedback@onward.co.uk
In writing	Onward Homes, 2 Christie Way, Renaissance Court, Manchester M21 7QY

We will respond to your complaint in line with our Complaints Policy.