

## OAP Garden Maintenance Scheme – Recommencing In Phases

### Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

**Q. Why did you pause the grass cutting service?**

A. The scheme was due to start as lockdown was imposed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, so we took the opportunity to review who was on the list so we could review all our risk assessments and ensure we could ensure social distancing to keep both our employees and you, our customers safe. We amended our website to advise customers and took the time to phone every customer to discuss this. We are pleased to say that we currently (11/5/20) have 120 households on the scheme, as well as our sheltered schemes.

**Q. Who is eligible for the OAP grass cutting service?**

A. General eligibility is for council tenants who are either over 75's with no family to assist or for those under 75 receiving high level mobility disability benefits, who have a garden. Due to COVID19 if there is anyone who meets this criteria across our neighbourhoods we will work with you to assist. The scheme has capacity for up to 200 so is on a first come first served basis. We will help non-council tenants during the COVID19 crisis who meet this criteria and where our staff can ensure safe social distancing.

**Q. When does the scheme restart and why is it phased?**

A. The scheme restarts on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and we have identified 96 properties where the lawns can be cut whilst social distancing is observed. We will contact you this week to advise the current situation in relation to your own property. Regrettably we are unable to cut lawns where the 2m distance rule could not be applied. We will continue to keep the list under review in line with government guidance.

**Q. What if my garden doesn't qualify?**

A. We will review the list regularly and update you if there are any changes but the safety of staff and customers is paramount.

**Q. When will cutting take place if my property is suitable?**

A. Grass cutting will be on a rolling cycle from the 19<sup>th</sup> May and will be 8 – 4pm weekdays weather permitting until 7 October 2020. Until we have done the first cut we won't know exact timescales – but thereafter we will let you know the anticipated frequency of cutting as it will continue until end of September 2020

**Q. What will happen to the first cut grass?**

A. The grass cutting equipment will be lifted to minimise grass cuttings left. But these will not be collected so that we can cut as many people's grass as possible

**Q. What if social distancing cannot be achieved when you arrive?**

A. The service will be withdrawn at that property; there are strict measures in place to protect employees and customers if these are breached then we will not be able to cut your grass.

**Q. How will I know it's a Council employee grass cutter?**

A. Staff will have ID visible to you and should not be entering your property at all. If you have any concerns then you should ring 01827 709709 to report them. If the team are at your sheltered scheme then please contact your scheme manager in the first instance.

**Q. What lawns will be cut?**

A. The lawns you have selected on your application where social distancing can be achieved, typically this will be the front and will be where the garden can be accessed safely

**Q. I live on a sheltered scheme will anything be different and how will I know?**

A. Your scheme manager will liaise with Streetscene to update you

**Q. Is it safe to restart the service?**

A. Safe measures have been put in place in line with government guidelines, to protect Customers and Staff.

**Q. What if I don't want my grass cut at the moment?**

A. We fully understand you may wish to suspend or cancel your service. Please contact us on the number below and we will remove you from the list.

**Q. My grass is overgrown with weeds and shrubs coming out of it - will you still mow it?**

A. We will mow lawns where it is possible however if there is rubbish present on the grass or the mower cannot cut through it we will be unable to proceed until it is cleared.

**Q. I applied to go on the waiting list when the season was not running, when will I hear from you?**

A. We will contact you this month to discuss your application.

Please let us know if you have any questions on 01827 709514.