

Grounds Maintenance The Way Forward

Nick Spenceley

Context

- The current method of grounds maintenance service delivery is failing to achieve the required standard with many housing sites not being cut within a 4-6 week cutting cycle.
- As well as being a Mayoral and resident priority, the Regulator of Social Housing has two tenant satisfaction measures related to this.
- TP10 - Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained
- TP11 - Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
- In 2023/24 Croydon Council scored 51% and 49% for these measures respectively.

Current Situation

- Housing have engaged two external contractors to undertake grounds maintenance services across a number of sites during 2024/25
- Additional funding has been secured for grass cutting this year
- A review of grounds maintenance services for housing is taking place during summer 2024

Grounds Maintenance Review

- Housing have engaged Peter Holman & Associates to undertake a review of housing grounds maintenance services during the summer of 2024.
- They are a company who have carried out work to reorganise the delivery of council housing grounds maintenance services successfully in other boroughs including City of Westminster and London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- Peter Holman, a resident of the borough, has extensive experience in assessing horticultural maintenance, having served as a Britain in Bloom UK Finals Judge and International Judge (Entente Florale) and the UK Commissioner for World Urban Parks. He was a founding member of Green Flag and a judge for many years.

Grounds Maintenance Review

To increase services standards and resident satisfaction, we will work closely with partners to achieve improvements in grounds maintenance on council housing estates. This will include:

- Assessing the Council's Grounds Maintenance service
- Reviewing the works provided by the two external contractors carrying out works to Housing sites
- Actively involving council residents, the current service providers, and others to comprehensively understand the current situation, and seek insights on future maintenance, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued.
- Creating a specialist task and finish group made up of council residents who have expressed an interest in improving grounds maintenance on Council estates. Meetings will be held monthly over the review period with options for future service delivery to be presented to the group by October/ November 2024.

The review will determine the recommended future option for undertaking grounds maintenance services on Croydon Council housing estates.

Next Steps

- Completion of review with recommendation of future service provision by October/November 2024
- Resident Feedback
- Implementation of recommendation (subject to internal governance/procurement) prior to new growing season in March/April 2025

Grounds Maintenance Review

- If you would like to take part in the review of Housing Grounds Maintenance please contact Nick Spenceley, Head of Contact Centre, Estates and Environmental Services.

Nick.Spenceley@croydon.gov.uk