

Service Area	Arboriculture & Soft Landscapes		
Service Overview			
Purpose of Service	Working with residents in Kent we manage the highway landscape, ensure the safety of highway users and conserve green spaces.		
Statutory Obligations (what we must do...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highways Act 1980 – duty of care to ensure safety of highway. Maintain highway clearance. ▪ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – protection of wildlife including nesting birds; protection of designated sites e.g. SSSI. Control of noxious weeds Japanese Knotweed ▪ Town and Country Planning Act – works to protected trees and replanting requirements ▪ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 - general duties which employers have towards employees and members of the public. ▪ Environmental Protection Act – Control of noxious weeds, use of chemicals and disposal of waste following highway operations. ▪ Weeds Act 1959 – control of injurious weeds e.g. Ragwort ▪ Occupiers Liability Act – duty of care, nuisance ▪ Pesticides Act – use of pesticides 		
Size of Asset	11 million square metres of grass, shrubs, weeds and 500,000 trees.		
Financial Position			
Year	<u>2010/11</u>	<u>2011/12</u>	<u>2012/13</u>
Budget (tree maint. grass cutting. weed control)	£4.6M	£3.2M	
Staff	19	14	
Levels of Service			
	<u>2010/11</u>	<u>2011/12</u>	<u>2012/13</u>
Grass, Weeds, Shrubs			
Additional (aesthetic) non safety weed/grass cuts	x	x	
Noxious / injurious weeds treatment spray	2	2	
Rural grass cutting	2	1	
Shrub maintenance	2 – 12	1	
Urban grass cutting	10 – 18	8	
Visibility cutting (sight lines at junctions etc)	3+	3	
Weed spraying	2-3	1	
Trees and Hedges			
Bus route clearance	✓	x	
Clear sight of signs and traffic signals	✓	✓	
Clear trees from around streetlights	✓	✓	
Diseased/dangerous trees; plus out of hours	✓	Safety only	
Hedge cutting (KCC hedges, not private)	2	1	
Improving natural light / views	x	x	
Maintain carriageway clearances (for safety)	✓	✓	
Pollen/residue removal	x	x	
Private hedges/trees overhanging the highway	x	x	
Private tree/hedge cuts when highway obstructed	✓	✓ (recharge costs)	
Programmed tree maintenance	✓	✓	
Prune/fell for dropped kerbs/new vehicle crossings	x	x	
Prune/fell trees considered "too big" / "too small"	x	x	
Pruning for aesthetic reasons	✓	x	
Removal of major dead wood (Selected species)	✓	x	
Removal of minor dead wood	✓	x	
Remove nuisance where tree touches building	✓	✓	
Remove tree stumps	✓	Safety only	
Remove/reduce leaf fall	x	x	
Satellite signal interference	x	x	
Telephone wire interference	x	x	
Tree planting / maintenance	✓	Legal replacements	
Tree safety audits (routine inspections)	2 & 5 year cycles	5 year cycle	
Trees overhanging buildings	x	x	
Trip hazards (make safe)	✓	✓	
Other			
Bird droppings	x	x	
Insurance claims	✓	✓	
Pest management (Brown tail moth)	✓	✓	
Pest management outside of statutory req's	x	x	

Rodent clearance	✓	✓	
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Efficiencies and Opportunities

Year	<u>2010 / 11</u>	<u>2011 / 12</u>	<u>2012 / 13</u>
Efficiencies	<p><u>Improved Arrangements with Districts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stop private hedge cutting by District contracts. ▪ Reduce grass cutting frequencies. ▪ Reduce rates paid. 	<p><u>Use of KCC Landscape Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use in house and external market price comparison to seek reduced costs. 	<p><u>Spend to save</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify high cost or intensive maintenance issues and replace with low cost/low maintenance.
Opportunities	<p><u>Member Highway Fund</u> Tree felling and tree planting schemes.</p> <p><u>Thanet Weed Pilot Study</u> – Assessment of future weed control options and impact on water quality</p> <p><u>Localism</u> Community tree planting</p>	<p><u>Member Highway Fund</u> Tree felling and tree planting schemes.</p> <p><u>Localism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tree planting – The Big Tree Plant ▪ Tree Wardens – tree planting initiatives and joint working/training opportunities ▪ Joint working potential with Parish/District Councils and local groups through KALC/NFU ▪ Information pack on web site for customers wanting to assist with verge maintenance. ▪ Approval process agreed for customers to work on highway verges. ▪ Potential for Community Payback/Prison Service schemes to assist in landscape maintenance ▪ Recharge process for works to private trees/hedges ▪ Alternative techniques for vegetation management – growth retardants for basal growth on trees and weed control. 	<p><u>Localism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with volunteers and community groups ▪ Develop a further range of information ‘can do’ packs on web site. ▪ Pump priming local schemes – provision of technical back up/training to enable future local ownership of schemes.