

Meeting	Parks and Open Spaces Committee
Date	13 th June 2023
Report Title	Autumn/Winter Shrubs
Agenda Reference	14
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Officer Recommendations

To note the report.

Autumn/Winter Program (October – March)

The in-house Autumn / Winter program which ran from October until March ran smoothly. Operations included the external hire of two operatives and a mini tractor and side arm for ten working days for the main harder to reach areas.

It was a program that included enhanced reduction of shrubs and hedgerows to aid maintenance in future years. It is anticipated that this extensive reduction will continue throughout the Autumn / Winter program for the next three seasons (2023 – 2026). The specification in 2026 will be reviewed and amended where necessary to reflect the recent operational changes due to taking on this service in-house.

Public Enquiries (April - May)

50% of the entire scope of the previous external Autumn / Winter program was achieved. April is the beginning of birds nesting season, so major reductions stopped, and the team were thoroughly risk assessing any works to be done. Birds nesting season ends at the end of September.

The warmer weather led to increased requests from the public for correction works or cutting back regrowth. These requests are attended to with 20 working days where resources and weather conditions allow. Throughout April, the team worked on main crossings and walkways.

Summer Programme (June – September)

Summer shrub bed maintenance has begun with effect from Monday 5th June 2023. Abbey Meads, Haydon Wick, Greenmeadow, Moredon, Haydon End and finishing up in Oakhurst. At the end of this programme the Autumn/Winter Programme will begin again.

The schedule is being conducted by the Deputy Parks & Open Spaces Manager and a member of the team. Once grass cutting is on schedule, the back up team will also be out hedge cutting.

Working Towards

Long term roadside removal of shrub beds is to be investigated further with costs being brought to a future Committee meeting. Roadside removal would be considered where quality of bed and not to create parking problems would be the main criteria. Severe hedge reductions on other roadside junctions from 4ft to approx.