

BARFORD LANE CEMETERY GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

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TENDER DOCUMENT September 2026



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1 Background

The current Grounds Maintenance Contract at Barford Lane Cemetery in Downton ends on 31 March 2027.

Downton Parish Council invites Tenders for a replacement 12-month Contract to deliver Grounds Maintenance Services for the period 01 April 2027-31 March 2028.

Barford Lane Cemetery is a place of remembrance, dignity, and peace. The Contractor who is awarded the replacement Grounds Maintenance Contract must undertake all works in a manner that reflects the sensitive nature of the site and to maintain it to a consistently high standard, as set out in this Tender Document.

2 Contract Scope and Specification

The purpose of this Tender Document is to obtain a fixed price itemised quotation to deliver Grounds Maintenance Services for the period 01 April 2027-31 March 2028: -

Service	Frequency	Delivery Notes
Grass Cutting • All lawn areas and peripheral grassed areas (adjacent to paths, hedges, boundaries, and around benches) • Areas between and around graves, headstones, memorials, and grave kerbing	<u>April–November 2027 & March 2028</u> Grass cutting approximately fortnightly covering the grass cutting season. This provides approx. 18 visits April–November 2027 and two visits in March 2028.	Each visit shall include all necessary edging, trimming, or strimming around paths, graves, headstones, memorials, grave kerbing, benches, trees, signs, boundaries, and other obstacles. Following each visit, grass shall have a reasonably uniform finished appearance across the open areas with an approximate finished height of 25–50 mm, subject to seasonal and ground conditions, and shall not ordinarily be permitted to exceed 75 mm between programmed visits. The Contractor shall programme visits to maintain the specified condition standard and

		shall not materially extend the interval between visits without the prior agreement of the Council. In periods of abundant growth, the Council can instruct additional cuts, which may be necessary, for which no additional payment will be made. In periods of drought, the Contractor may request that the Council suspends cutting for which no refund will be claimed by the Council. Grass cuttings may be left evenly distributed where they do not adversely affect the appearance or use of the cemetery. All cuttings deposited on memorials, grave plots, kerbing, benches and hard surfaces shall be removed before completion of the visit. Clumps and excessive accumulations shall be collected and removed.
Hedge Maintenance	One principal cut annually, to be undertaken during September/October, subject to weather conditions and confirmation that no active bird nests are present.	Trim the full length of the hedges on all accessible faces and the tops to maintain neat, dense, and uniform hedges. Cut back the current season's growth to the established maintained height and

		width, unless otherwise instructed by the Council. The finished tops shall be level and the sides evenly trimmed. Growth projecting over paths, graves, boundaries or other maintained areas shall be cut back to the established hedge line. The Contractor shall avoid excessive cutting into old wood or substantial reduction of the established hedges unless specifically authorised by the Council. All hedge bases shall be left clear of brambles and cut material. All hedge cuttings and arisings shall be collected and removed from the site. Before commencing work, the Contractor shall inspect the hedges for active bird nests. Where an active nest is identified, work in the affected section shall cease and the Council shall be informed.
Weed Control • Paths • Quiet Contemplation Area • Cremated Remains Area	A minimum of three programmed treatments shall be undertaken per contract year: 1. April/May 2. June/July 3. August/September	Treatment timing shall be adjusted where necessary to take account of weather conditions, weed growth, and the effectiveness of previous applications. The specified treatment areas shall be maintained in a substantially weed-free

		condition throughout the growing season. The Contractor shall undertake additional spot treatment, at no additional cost, where a programmed treatment has failed to achieve satisfactory control or significant regrowth occurs between programmed treatments. Any gravel displaced during the operation in the Cremated Remains Area and the Quiet Contemplation Area shall be reinstated and the surface left level and tidy. All applications shall be undertaken by appropriately qualified personnel using products authorised for the intended use and in accordance with applicable legislation, manufacturer requirements and good practice.
Clearance of Leaves and Debris - Quiet Contemplation Area	• <u>April–September</u> The area shall be inspected as part of each programmed grounds-maintenance visit and accumulated debris removed as necessary. • <u>October–December</u> During the principal leaf-fall period, the area shall receive a	Clearance methods shall be appropriate for the gravelled surface and shall not materially remove or displace the gravel. Any gravel displaced during the operation shall be reinstated and the surface left level and tidy. All arisings shall be removed from the site and shall not be blown or

	minimum of fortnightly clearance, with additional clearance where necessary to prevent significant accumulation. • <u>January–March</u> The area shall be inspected monthly, with debris removed as necessary.	deposited onto adjoining grass, planting, paths, graves, or other Council land. The bench shall be left clear of leaves and debris and readily accessible.
Additional delivery notes: • The Contractor shall provide an electronic service record within 72 hours of each attendance identifying the date/time, details of operation undertaken, and supporting photographic evidence to demonstrate completion. • Powered strimmers shall not be used in direct contact with memorials, headstones, kerbing, trees, or other susceptible surfaces. The Contractor shall use guards, appropriate working techniques, or alternative hand-held equipment where necessary to prevent damage. • Particular care shall be exercised when working around headstones, memorials, grave markers, and kerbing. Machinery and cutting equipment shall not strike, scrape, chip, stain, or otherwise damage memorials or grave furniture. Any damage shall be reported to the Council immediately and rectified at the Contractor's expense. • The Council will provide advance notice of known interments; however, the Contractor's operatives shall suspend work immediately when funerals or interments are taking place. • The Contractor's operatives shall conduct themselves professionally, appropriately, and respectfully at all times. • The Cemetery is a smoke-free and vape-free zone. • Radios, music, and amplified sound equipment are strictly prohibited. • Littering, vandalism, and inappropriate behaviour are strictly prohibited. • Vehicles and machinery must: ○ use designated routes and parking bays only ○ not exceed 5mph ○ not damage grass, paths, and kerbs. Any damage shall be reported to the Council immediately and rectified at the Contractor's expense.		

3 Contractor Requirements

As part of the Tender process, the Council invites you to submit the following information and documentation:

A. Pricing Schedule

An itemised pricing schedule showing the relevant quantity, unit price, and annual value attributed to each principal element of the service, using the template on Page 12.

The total annual Contract Price shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the Tender submission deadline.

The annual Contract Price shall be paid in 12 equal monthly instalments.

B. Method Statement

Explaining

- How you will deliver the specification.
- How you will manage peak grass growth periods.
- Quality control procedures.
- Reporting arrangements.
- Communication with the Council.

C. Relevant Experience and References

Examples and references for:

- Similar Council contracts.
- Cemetery maintenance experience, if available.

D. Staffing and Resources

Details of:

- Number of operatives that would be assigned to this contract.
- Supervisory arrangements.
- Contingency cover for sickness and holidays.
- Machinery fleet.
- Availability of replacement broken-down equipment.

E. Health & Safety

- Health & Safety Policy.
- Risk Assessment example.
- Accident reporting procedure.
- Evidence of operator training and competence.

F. Insurance Documentation

- Public Liability: £10 million
- Employers' Liability: £10 million (where legally required)
- Motor Insurance

G. Environmental Statement

- Biodiversity practices.
- Recycling and disposal of arisings.
- Measures taken to minimise environmental impact.

4 Tender Process

- Requests for site visits to be accompanied by a Council representative will take place strictly by appointment. Requests must be submitted in writing to clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk no later than **Friday 09 October 2026 5pm**.
- Accompanied site visits must be completed by **Friday 16 October 2026**
- Questions relating to this Tender must be submitted in writing to clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk no later than **Friday 23 October 2026 5pm**.
- Every Tender must be submitted in writing to clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk no later than **Friday 06 November 2026 5pm**. The email subject line must state **"TENDER (CEMETERY GROUNDS MAINTENANCE): Do not open before 5pm 06 Nov 2026"**. Tender emails will not be opened, previewed, or otherwise accessed before the submission deadline. Following expiry of the deadline, all Tenders received will be opened in succession as part of a single tender-opening exercise and their receipt and opening recorded.
- The Council will make the final decision on the award of the Contract which will be advised in writing by a 'Notification of Award of Contract' letter by **Monday 21 December 2026**.
- Unsuccessful bids will be advised in writing by **Monday 21 December 2026**. The Council reserves the right to provide feedback to unsuccessful tenderers upon request.
- The Tenderer shall comply with the Bribery Act 2010 and shall not engage in any activity, practice, or conduct that would constitute an offence under the Act. Any attempt to influence the procurement process by offering gifts, hospitality, inducements, or other benefits to Members or Officers of the Council may result in immediate disqualification from the tender process.
- Bid Clarification: This may take place between the Clerk, as procurement officer, and the bidder(s) to address aspects of the tender which are unclear. Clarification is not an opportunity for bidders to improve their bids and will be included within the final contract to ensure they're legally binding.

- Post-Tender Negotiation (PTN): Following evaluation of the Tenders against the published criteria, the Council may enter into clarification and/or limited negotiation with the preferred bidder prior to award of the Contract. This may include seeking clarification or improvement of the price or other commercial terms offered. Any such discussions will not permit a material change to the Tender, the Contract Scope and Specification, or the basis upon which the Tenders have been evaluated and will not be used to alter the outcome of the evaluation process. The Council reserves the right to award the Contract on the basis of the Tender as originally submitted without undertaking such discussions.
- At all stages the competing tenderers will be treated in an honest, fair, and ethical manner, whilst retaining confidentiality of their bids.
- The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest price or any Tender and reserves the right not to award a Contract.
- The Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Tenderers should clearly identify any information they consider commercially sensitive.
- Any personal information exchanged during this Tender process will be handled in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

5 Evaluation Criteria and Award of Contract

The Council will evaluate each Tender (one by one) using a three-stage process.

- Stage 1: Essential requirements
On a 'Pass' or Fail' basis.
Tenders failing an essential requirement will be rejected at this stage. Essential requirements are submission by the Tender deadline, provision of the required pricing information, evidence of the required insurance cover, and acceptance of the Contract Scope and Specification.
- Stage 2: Quality Assessment
The supporting submission will be assessed against the Contractor Requirements and Contract Scope and Specification using the 0–5 scoring scale on Page 11.
- Stage 3: Price and Value for Money
The Council will consider the Tender price in conjunction with the Quality Assessment at Stage 2 in order to determine the overall value for money represented by each Tender. The lowest-priced Tender will not necessarily represent the best value for money, and the Council is not bound to accept the lowest-priced Tender.

The outcome of the Quality Assessment and the assessment of Price and Value for Money will inform the Council's final decision on the award of the Contract.

Score	Basis upon which the Score is awarded
0	Major concerns
1	Significant shortcomings
2	Shortcomings
3	Raises no concerns
4	Above expectations
5	Significantly above expectations

6 Pricing Schedule Template for Barford Lane Cemetery

Tenderers must complete all applicable sections of this Pricing Schedule. Prices shall be exclusive of VAT. The total annual Contract Price must include all labour, supervision, machinery, equipment, materials, travel, disposal of arisings and all other costs necessary to deliver the Contract Scope and Specification.

Service	Frequency	Unit Price (£)	Annual Price (£)
Grass Cutting	20 visits	£ per visit	£
Hedge Maintenance	1 annual cut	£	£
Weed Control	3 treatments	£ per treatment	£
Quiet Contemplation Area: Apr-Sep	Inspection and clearance as necessary during programmed Grass Cutting visits	£ fixed cost <u>or</u> per visit	£
Quiet Contemplation Area: Oct-Dec	Minimum fortnightly clearance	£ per visit	£
Quiet Contemplation Area: Jan-Mar	Monthly inspection and clearance as necessary	£ per visit	£
TOTAL ANNUAL CONTRACT PRICE (excluding VAT)			£
VAT (if applicable)			£
TOTAL ANNUAL CONTRACT PRICE (including VAT)			£

The total annual Contract Price shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the Tender submission deadline.

The annual Contract Price shall be paid in 12 equal monthly instalments.

Company/organisation: _____

Name of authorised signatory: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____