



## **Saxon Weald Grounds Maintenance and Tree Maintenance Contracts – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why are Saxon Weald ending the contract with idverde?**

The current contract with idverde was due to expire in March 2025. However, given feedback from customers and acknowledging that performance has not been satisfactory, we have given six months' notice to idverde in accordance with the contract.

### **Why will there be two contracts moving forward?**

In the past we have always had one contractor providing grounds maintenance for all our sites. As we have grown as a business, the geographical spread of our sites has increased and now we feel it is sensible to split these areas up so that contractors local to where you live can tender for the work.

Just like we might shop around for new car insurance, Saxon Weald will look at what suppliers can offer us in a new contract, to provide you with a good service which is also value for money.

### **What is a Section 20 consultation?**

Whilst looking around to place a new contract or renew an existing one, we are required to consult with our affected residents. This is called a Section 20 Consultation. We're legally obliged to issue a Section 20 notice to let you know about certain proposed major works or services planned to your building or estate. However, the Section 20 process is also your chance to give us your opinion on these plans.

### **Who can bid for this work?**

Owing to the value of the contract, we are legally required to advertise the proposed contract by public notice. This process ensures fair and competitive tendering, but it does mean that on this occasion you are not able to nominate a contractor directly for the work.

However, if you know of a local supplier who may be interested in bidding for one of the areas, you can direct them to the CHIC portal link <https://app.panacea-software.com/chic/Login.aspx>

### **Who is CHIC?**

The Communities and Housing Investment Consortium (CHIC) are a specialist organisation helping us with public notice and the tender process. They will vet any contractors intending to bid for the contract to ensure they satisfy Saxon Weald's standards. This includes making sure:

- they are financially sound
- they have the right insurances in place
- they have a good record of health and safety.

**How have you divided the areas?**

We will divide the grounds maintenance contract into 4 areas/lots:

1. Lot 1: East (East Sussex sites)
2. Lot 2: West (Hampshire sites)
3. Lot 3: North (West Sussex sites north of the A272)
4. Lot 4: South (West Sussex sites south of the A272)

We are limiting the number of lots that any one contractor can be awarded, if they are successful, to a maximum of two lots.

However, the tree maintenance contract will cover all areas, and will be awarded to one contractor. For health and safety reasons any tree works carried out need to be monitored to ensure that they are carried out to a safe and acceptable standard. The contract works will be monitored by an independent expert.

**What is included in the grounds maintenance service?**

This will include the maintenance of all communal, soft, and hard landscape surfaces and features to all sites. The scope of grounds maintenance will include communal areas, play areas, verges, gardens, non-adopted roads, and pathways. It excludes private gardens and land managed by other authorities.

We have employed a specialist grounds maintenance consultant to help us write a new service specification. This is a list of what we want the suppliers to do and how they should go about delivering their services. We have recognised that depending on the type of work required to each site there will be a slightly different frequency of visits required. For example, some communal areas may require grass cutting only, but others may also have extensive shrub beds and hedges. We have assessed each site to decide how many visits should take place during the year.

**What is included in the tree maintenance service?**

This will cover the inspection and maintenance of trees in external communal areas. It will also include a specialist service to survey trees in communal areas, as well as carrying out works recommended from tree surveys and inspections. In addition, it will provide an emergency service to carry out reactive works needed to trees.

**How will you monitor the contract to ensure performance is better?**

We will put in place a number of measures to make sure that quality is checked regularly. These will include:

- On-site visits by Saxon Weald staff to check the quality for ourselves.
- Making sure the contractor quickly deals with feedback from customers.
- Regular meetings with the contractor.

**How long will the contract last?**

The contracts will be for an initial period of three years. Subject to the performance of the contractor, we will be able to extend this annually up to a maximum term of five years.

**Will I pay more? And when will I know how much the new service will cost me?**

Since the original contract was agreed with the current contractors, many costs have increased including fuel, wages, and the cost of disposing of grass, hedge cuttings and other waste.

As Saxon Weald are committed to ensuring a quality service is provided, we do expect that the costs of the new contracts will result in an increase to your grounds maintenance charges.

Once we have the prices from contractors and details of their bids, we will assess them for both quality of service and value for money. More information on which contractors are proposed to be awarded the contracts, details of the service for your site, and the costs will be provided to you in the next consultation letter.

**Will the grass get cut more often and will the grass be collected and removed?**

Yes, the grass will be cut more often. The contractor will be informed how many visits are required for each site. We expect any excessive waste to be removed on all sites, but frequent grass cutting will mean the clippings get recycled back into the lawn which helps fertilize the lawn and reduce the amount of waste to dispose of.

We hope that increased costs associated with more visits will be partly offset by the reduction in disposal of grass cutting waste from the contract.

**Will it be the same contractor that you use now?**

This depends on whether they decide to put in a price for the contracts. If they do, they will be considered alongside the other contractors.

**Can I get involved?**

Yes, you can. If you'd like to share your view, please provide your feedback in writing using one of the following methods:

- Email: [S20.consultation@saxonweald.com](mailto:S20.consultation@saxonweald.com)
- Download and return the form on our website: [www.wealdliving.com/consultations](http://www.wealdliving.com/consultations)
- Return the enclosed observation form by **18 December 2022** to:

**S20 Consultations  
Saxon Weald  
38-42 Worthing Road  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 1DT**

