

# Provision of a Grounds Maintenance Service to South Hinksey Parish Council

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## **Executive Summary**

The Parish Council has invited tenders for its grounds maintenance work at the burial ground and in the village.

Oxford City Council can provide a cost effective and professional grounds maintenance service to South Hinksey Parish Council that we believe offers excellent value for money.

This will be carried out by Oxford City Council Park's department, utilising the Cemeteries & Grounds Maintenance Services.

## **Situational understanding**

We understand that South Hinksey Parish Council wants to offer a high quality grounds maintenance service for their burial ground and village. We also understand that you are particularly aware of the need for manpower and equipment to be operated in a sensitive and considerate way with careful consideration being given to the areas close to graves generally and memorials in particular.

## **Approach**

Our Cemeteries Team and Grounds Maintenance Teams are based at Cutteslowe Park Depot in North Oxford and together they have decades of experience covering a wide range of grounds maintenance services and burial services.

There is a dedicated team maintaining the grounds of the four large cemeteries in Oxford as well as managing the burial process through a highly emotional time for families and friends. All work is carried out by qualified, experienced and trustworthy staff, whom are trained to Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM) standards.

All of our cemeteries staff have completed appropriate courses with the Institute, including the following:

- ICCM Certificate of Cemetery Management
- ICCM COTS 1 (Health and Safety in Cemeteries)
- ICCM COTS 2 (Excavator Operations)
- ICCM Customer Care Programme
- ICCM Cemetery Sexton Course
- ICCM Management of Memorials

Parks staff are fully trained and have certification in Amenity Horticulture (minimum level NVQ2), NPTC certification for use of strimmers & brush cutters, hedgetrimmers, tractors and chippers, PA1 and PA6 for herbicide application.

Staff have also undertaken general courses related to manual handling, handling of sharps, smarter driving, dealing with aggressive behaviour, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, along with many other training sessions provided by Oxford City Council.

This level of training demonstrates our commitment to providing a highly qualified workforce, capable of operating to a very high standard. Furthermore, we operate a fleet of modern, environmentally friendly vehicles that are maintained to a high standard and which are replaced on a regular basis to ensure that we are always using the most fuel efficient equipment.

Our Parks, Open Spaces, Tree and Cemetery teams have an excellent track record for delivering high quality services. They have won national recognition, including 6 Green Flag Awards, Thames and Chilterns in Bloom, Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)

Most Improved Team of the Year and, very recently, one of our horticultural apprentices was awarded Apprentice of the Year.

Parks maintain 26 nature reserves, many of which include wild flower meadows and 3 of which are SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest).

As an organisation we take part in the Local Government 'Inform' survey where specific questions are asked about Oxford's Parks and Open Spaces and the services that Parks provide. Currently our public satisfaction rate is 83% which puts us in the top quartile of Local Authorities in England. We also ask our own tenants how they feel about our Parks and Parks Services and again the satisfaction levels are high.

We are also members of the Investors in People (IiP) scheme and have recently received the ultimate accolade at the IiP annual awards ceremony by winning the Gold employer (+250 staff) 2015 and the Overall IiP winner 2015.

Being a local authority, we have a full range of policies, processes and procedures that are designed to meet high quality standards (including Quality Management System (ISO9001) and Environmental Management System (ISO14001) and full compliance as regards to current legislation and health and safety.

Finally, Oxford City Council has embedded the customer into the very heart of what we do and this has resulted in us recently being awarded Customer Service Excellence for the whole of Direct Services.

### **Solutions**

Choosing the City Council to provide a grounds maintenance service in your burial ground gives you the security of honest pricing, using qualified, experienced and trustworthy staff and the guarantee of safe and environmentally friendly practices from an organisation you can trust.

### **Pricing**

To meet the service specifications provided for the village and the burial ground, Oxford City Council would charge £3,855 per annum.

*This quotation is valid for 30 days from receipt and excludes VAT.*