

Kent County Council
Job Description: Soft Landscape Technician

Directorate: Growth Environment & Transport
Unit/Section: Soft Landscape Asset Management
Location: Ashford or Aylesford
Grade: KR7

Responsible to: Landscape Manager
Supervised by: Landscape Officer

Purpose of the Job:

To be a custodian of the highway soft landscape asset in specific districts across the County dealing efficiently with all service requests and contractors so the asset is maintained and the highway is safe and free from obstruction of highway vegetation for all users.

To assess, investigate, make decisions and respond to customers for enquiries and incidents relating to Soft Landscape Assets. Coordinate service responses generally and with specific project focus to operational service delivery. Liaise with stakeholders and undertake on-site surveys recording assets and determining and organising the deployment of appropriate resource. Ensure safety of the highway and delivery of service to appropriate standards.

Carryout on-site monitoring of landscape work and asset data collection. Deal with customer enquiries and service suppliers, ordering works, monitoring quality and updating KCC systems.

Main duties and responsibilities:

1. Monitor and deliver programmed landscape asset term service maintenance contracts for; urban grass, shrubs, hedges; rural swathe, visibility, hedges, RNR (Roadside Nature Reserves) SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest); weed control on the highway hard surface; control of noxious weeds and pests; off road cycle paths; HSR (High Speed Roads); private vegetation re-chargeable works; planting schemes; Member Funded projects; and other environmental and wildlife related activities. To include adhoc small works and emergency / severe weather related works
2. Identify the requirements for ad-hoc bring to standard and remedial works. Write specifications and commission works ensuring compliance with KCC and Public Procurement Regulations and KCC Value for Money standards. Carry out contractor

supervision and post works monitoring ensuring defects are identified, corrected and reinspected prior to authorising applications for payment.

3. Collect supporting information and data on the timely delivery of programmed works to the required quality for the calculation of contractor Operational Performance Measures (OPMs) for potential deductions on applications for payments and to identify areas for service improvement.
4. Raise work orders to contractors on Confirm WAMs and purchase orders on IPROC. Administration of the works order to payment cycle, keeping a close control of costs and monies paid against budgets, and ensure records in WAMS and IPROC are updated and closed within performance timelines.
5. Assist contractors and District / Parish Council partners to deliver landscape works safely in compliance with health and safety and highway legislation, including traffic management, road works and KLRs (Kent Lane Rental Scheme) permits.
6. Ensure prompt investigation and response to service requests, enquiries, complaints, damage claims and FOI (Freedom of Information) requests raised by customers, Council Members, other District / Parish Councillors and Officers, MPs, transportation or utility providers, community groups or other HTW teams, whether by post, email, internet, telephone or via the KCC Highways Contact Centre and track in accordance with HTW customer care policies and performance indicators.
7. Collect, update and amend landscape asset data on GIS via on-site inspections using ArcCollector on a tablet device or other recording method or desk top study and ArcGIS. Specifically recording asset type, quantities, dimensions, condition, highway / land ownership, defects and identifying required priority or remedial works.
8. Assist in the production of accurate asset plans and contract schedules for the issue of contract compensation events and also in preparation for the tendering of term service contracts through open public procurement.
9. Establish a professional relationship with Council Members, acting on the issues raised, undertaking site and parish visits to resolve landscape asset or vegetation, weeds, pest issues and discuss matters of mutual interest.
10. Foster seamless working and provide assistance to other teams within the GET directorate, or any other part of KCC, from time to time as and when your skills and knowledge are required for particular projects and initiatives
11. Undertake supplementary administrative and technical tasks as and when required, to support other team members and the team leader.
12. The post holder must be prepared to undertake work outside normal office hours in the interests of the service, such as during an emergency.
13. The post holder must have the ability to travel efficiently to multiple sites throughout the County.

14. Monitor on-site works collecting supporting information and data on the timely delivery of programmed works to the required quality. Assist with the calculation of contractor Operational Performance Measures (OPM's) for potential deductions on payment applications. Identify areas for service improvement.

Footnote: This job description is provided to assist the job holder to know what his/her main duties are. It may be amended from time to time without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of post.

Organisational Responsibilities

All staff have an explicit responsibility to work as part of a team to deliver, collectively, the agenda of the County Council. These are fundamental elements of their role not an addition and are summarised as follows;

Whole Council

- Seek to improve the lives of all residents in Kent and the economy of Kent
- Act as corporate parent to the Council's looked after children
- Take an active role in promoting and ensuring the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- Understand, communicate and contribute to the delivery of KCC's strategic aims
- Meet statutory obligations and promote and ensure compliance with policies and procedures and the Council's Code of Conduct (Kent Code).
- Advise elected Members and support the democratic process
- Promote the Council brand and enhance the overall reputation of the Council
- Understand and monitor the measures of performance, including customer insight, which define successful outcomes for KCC services.
- Maintain and ensure a relentless focus on the customer
- Act to support the Council-wide need to deliver services within budget, thereby avoiding an overspend that could damage the financial viability of the Council • Overcome professional and service silos to achieve the County Council's objectives.

Integration of Services

- Focus resources where they have the biggest impact
- Deliver services that are flexible and adaptable
- Integrate services within KCC and work with partner agencies to ensure a seamless customer experience
- Fully and inclusively engage all staff in the delivery of services, demonstrating the Council's leadership values and competencies.

Embedding Commissioning and Engaging Relevant Markets

- Establish an outcome focused organisation
- Meet the financial regulations and standing orders of KCC
- Challenge the status quo and engage with the market to constantly improve.
- Ensure all services are delivered effectively and efficiently
- Proactively and continuously seek to improve service delivery

- Proactively manage risk to avoid inertia whilst not exposing the Council to needless and avoidable challenge or loss

Managing Change

- Understand and support the Authority's overall change agenda
- Deliver required outcomes of service specific change on time and to budget
- Understand the quality of staff, support their development, nurture those with talent • Identify the skills for the future and the level of staff through robust workforce planning
- Identify and deal with underperformance.
- Deliver to agreed budget and income targets.

Kent County Council
Person Specification: Soft Landscape Technician

The following outlines the criteria for this post. Applicants who have a disability and who meet the minimum criteria will be shortlisted.

Applicants should describe in their application how they meet these criteria.

	CRITERIA
QUALIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good general education to GCSE or equivalent level, including passes at C grade or higher in Maths and English and City & Guilds accreditation in relevant subject; or ONC/BTEC or equivalent• Professional Horticultural qualification or equivalent (NVQ Level 2/3)
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant public or commercial sector experience working in the horticulture or grounds maintenance industry. Or recent qualified college leaver seeking first public sector landscape inspector position.• Experience of providing good customer care, particularly in dealing with customer complaints• Experience of regular multi-tasking and dealing with non-routine activities as well as advanced technical and/or practical skills with regard to using a wide range of office equipment and information systems in an administrative environment• Relevant technical experience of working in a customer orientated local government or highways/soft landscape environment• Relevant knowledge of legislation and codes of practice
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computer literate. Able to use MS Office and other typical general office packages, ArcGIS or other asset data mapping system. Knowledge & experience of confirm (WAMS) system would be an advantage.• Ability to be able to collect and record field data on site using IPads, provided by KCC for both urban and rural inspections (all weather & multi terrain)• Ability to use and interpret spatial data (maps and drawings)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ability to work to deadlines and under pressure • Able to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, at all levels with internal and external stakeholders and members of the public. • Ability to deal with public in difficult circumstances and
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage customer expectations • Demonstrable skills in managing information and communicating with a variety of stakeholders, with differing agendas • Excellent customer care and teamwork skills • Ability to drive to sites throughout Kent • Able to carry out walked inspections (average 6-8km per day). • Ability to carry out First Point Resolution (FPR) on site through manual means utilising provided equipment • Ability to prioritise work, using risk assessment techniques
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant knowledge of legislation and codes of practice related to Health & Safety, Highways Act. Risk assessment, NRSWA Chapter 8. • An understanding of landscape, environment, noxious weeds, and use of pesticides legislation
BEHAVIOURS & KENT VALUES	<p>Kent Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are brave. We do the right thing, we accept and offer challenge • We are curious to innovate and improve • We are compassionate, understanding and respectful to all • We are strong together by sharing knowledge • We are all responsible for the difference we make