



## News release

9 April 2020

For immediate release:

### **Grass cutting and grounds maintenance work reduced**

**To protect the safety of our staff and the public, and to ensure we can continue to collect general waste and recycling bins as scheduled across the district, we have temporarily stopped all non-essential grounds maintenance work and reduced other maintenance, such as grass cutting.**

Some grassed areas will still be cut however this will take place less frequently. This includes major parks and large open spaces so that people can still use these areas for their permitted daily exercise, as well as lawn sections in council-owned cemeteries.

Roadside verges and roundabouts will be regularly checked and cut where necessary to ensure good visibility. Rural paths will only be cut back when needed, whilst play areas and closed churchyards will not be cut at all.

Cllr James Mallinder, East Suffolk's cabinet member for the Environment, said: "In order to minimise the risks to staff and communities, we have reduced the amount of grounds work being carried across the district. Some grass cutting and maintenance is essential for public safety however much of the scheduled grass cutting can be reduced without any major impact on our everyday lives, especially while we are staying at home wherever possible.

"Grass in public open spaces is usually cut four times each year, however reducing the number of cuts means fewer staff out in the community, and also enables our wildlife to flourish in the longer grass. We know our residents are keen for us to create more spaces where wildlife can thrive and as a result, we had already committed to trialling reduced strimming and cutting in both Southwold and Saxmundham this year. When we can return to our usual service, we would encourage other towns and parishes to consider whether any of their community spaces could also benefit from reduced grass cutting."

**More...**

**For further information, please contact the Communications Team:**

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Some essential grounds maintenance work will continue for health and safety reasons, including emergency tree work, park inspections and burial services.

Grounds maintenance staff have been retrained to be able to assist with refuse collections.

**ENDS.**