Grounds Maintenance Consultation 2026

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Thank you to everyone who took part in our recent consultation, we received a good response with over **1300 of you** responding to the consultation. Your feedback has helped us shape how we aim to deliver grounds maintenance services going forward to meet your needs.

1. Why we carried out this consultation

With the current Grounds Maintenance contract coming to an end, we wanted to understand your views on proposed changes to our grounds maintenance service and the new Grounds Maintenance Policy, including:

- How often grass is cut
- How grass is managed (e.g. collecting or mulching clippings)
- Which areas are maintained
- What support is available for tenants who need help

2. What you told us

The consultation highlighted several key themes:

- **Support for the proposed changes:** Many of you supported more frequent grass cutting and better support for those unable to maintain gardens
- **Mixed views on grass clippings**: There were differing opinions about whether grass should be collected or left
- **Concerns about value for money:** Some of you raised questions about service charges and consistency of the service
- **Need for clearer communication:** You asked for clearer information about what is included within the Service and when the service would take place

3. What you told us about the current service and what we will do to improve the quality and reliability of the service moving forward

The most common issues raised were:

- Missed areas
- Inconsistent standards across different areas
- Communication gaps

We are addressing these issues now.

4. Will the number of cuts increase?

80% of you supported more frequent grass cutting, which means as part of the new contract

we intend to increase the frequency from **7 to 11 cuts per year**.

5. Will grass cuttings be collected, or left on the ground?

Some of you questioned the proposed approach raising concerns regarding areas being left looking untidy and messy and grass being left or carried into homes.

We considered different approaches with mulching preferred for all communal areas due to the environmental benefits.

The **first cut** of the year will be **cut and collect** with the **remaining cuts being cut and mulch**.

6. What is grass mulching and will it leave the area looking messy and untidy?

Mulching is a way of cutting grass where the grass is cut into very small pieces and left on the ground instead of being collected; the mower cuts the grass into very small pieces, which then fall back onto the lawn and break down naturally. **This will not leave large piles of grass behind**.

The benefit: It can help feed the grass naturally and keep lawns healthy, reduce waste as grass cuttings no longer needs to be transported and disposed of. It can also be a more environmentally friendly way of managing communal grassed areas.

7. How you will know whether your garden, communal area or estate is covered?

The service applies to all communal areas outside the curtilage of properties within our neighbourhoods and estates, which include areas around flats, bungalows, playgrounds and those properties designated as sheltered and/or supported housing.

Further information will be shared before any changes are introduced.

8. Will the service address weeds, hedges, shrubs, flower beds and leaf collecting?

We will maintain communal grounds including hedge maintenance, scrubland and communal area footpath weedkilling at scheduled intervals while keeping flower and shrub beds neat and tidy. We **do not** collect leaves on any of our land/grounds.

9. What support is available for tenants who need help?

There was strong support for helping tenants who are unable to maintain their gardens due to age, disability, or other circumstances.

We will provide an Assisted Gardening Service free of charge which will include **grass cutting (cut and collect) 6 times a year** and **hedge trimming twice a year** which will be:

- Fair
- Accessible
- Targeted to those most in need

10. Who will qualify for Assisted Gardening Service?

The service will be available to tenants who are unable to carry out maintenance of their garden and have no family living locally who can assist. This will be subject to a set criteria and application process. This service will only be available to tenants living in houses.

Further information will be shared with relevant tenants regarding the application process in due course.

If you live in bungalows and other property types, you will not need to apply as this service will form part of the general Grounds Maintenance schedule.

11. Will all areas be treated fairly?

Some highlighted the need for clearer boundaries between communal and private areas. We are currently reviewing and mapping maintained areas to ensure:

- Consistency
- Transparency
- Fair treatment across all communal areas

12. What will happen when areas agreed upon are missed, poorly cut or left untidy?

We will monitor the delivery of the ground's maintenance service through contract management arrangements, inspections, reviews and customer feedback. Where performance concerns are identified, we will take appropriate action. This may include follow-up inspections, corrective actions, review of site instructions or other measures considered necessary to improve service delivery.

13. Will service charges increase?

Cost and value for money were key concerns raised by some of you; subject to the tendering process no decisions have been made regarding changes to service charges at this time.

Any changes proposed will be clearly explained.

14. What are the next steps? When will the final decision be communicated with tenants?

We have reviewed all feedback received during the consultation. This feedback was carefully considered before the Policy was approved. We will now:

- Develop proposals based on what you have told us and enter a tendering process to appoint a contractor for the new contract starting in March 2027
- We will communicate any changes before they are introduced

You will be kept updated on:

- Service changes
- Any impact on service charges
- How to access support or make choices about services

Thank you again for taking part in the consultation. Your feedback is essential in helping us improve the service for everyone. If you have any questions please contact us on **0300 123 8084** or e-mail **enquiries@adra.co.uk**.

The new contract will start in March 2027, and working with the appointed contractor we will improve:

Reliability

Quality

Reporting and accountability