

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
9 September 2026**

Officer: Danny Powell – Operations Manager

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Purpose

To report on Town Council grounds maintenance operations.

Introduction

As we enter the Autumn period with school and summer holidays over, we reflect on one of the hottest and driest summers on record. I still consider that we had some of the best hanging baskets, floral planters and displays for several years. We have fulfilled our sports fixtures and our grass verges and open spaces have been maintained; the staff have carried this out in extreme weather conditions.

Our entry into the Heart of England in Bloom was well received by the judges and my thanks goes to the organisations we visited on the day. Our staff have also helped with the Knife Angel ceremonies in the Square and the Regreening project in Abbey Foregate. As we leave summer 2026 behind us, I hope for some rain to revive our green spaces across the town and an improvement in the conditions for our staff to work in.

Amenity Team

Britain in Bloom judging took place on 22nd July, several staff met the judges during the tour. Production of the spring bedding is now under way in the greenhouse. Our watering team have been very busy this summer and their hard work can be seen in the quality of our floral displays across Shrewsbury. Staff have planted up the new Abbey Foregate parklet and planters.

Where possible staff have been carrying out their normal maintenance duties during the summer months, the exception being that very little grass mowing has been carried out during this period. Greenhouse has been cleaned internally by the staff. A number of new plants have been trialled in different locations this summer, some have been successful and others not. Staff are now working on the plant numbers they require for next summer's displays.

Countryside Team

The yearly Ash Die Back survey is currently being undertaken across Shrewsbury.

A member of staff has been engaged in watering trees which were planted last winter to stop them dying.

Approximately 7.5 hectares of meadows has been cut and baled for hay. Maintenance of pathways across the countryside sites has been carried out.

The annual Reabrook clearance has taken place with debris being removed from the brook and banks.

Beever Compound checks have been carried out.

Litter picks across Countryside sites have been undertaken.

Rural mowing was stopped at the end of July because of the drought conditions.

The Arb Team have been carrying out Ash Die back work and other tree work across the town (Arb Team are the Rural mowing team in a normal summer)

Britain in Bloom judges visited Mousefield Countryside site on the judging tour.

Recs and Greenspace Team

Grass Verge, Open Space and School mowing was suspended at the end of July. We have cut some areas at the end of August and will assess whether to start grass cutting again in September.

The Verge cutting staff instead of their normal duties have been in the Cemetery cutting the Old Cemetery Area, this is now complete. Volunteers have raked up the spoil and staff are removing it from site.

Football pitch marking out has started with the season due to start on the 5 September on Town Council facilities. Fixtures at the Sports Village started the beginning of August which staff had to prepare for. Crown Green Bowls and Cricket fixtures will finish in the next few weeks. Autumn renovation will then start.

School hedge cutting has been completed, and staff will look to start mowing again, now it has rained.

The dry weather and the reduction in the need for mowing has given staff time to carry out work earlier than normal (path tidying, hedge cutting etc) on our Recreation Grounds and Open Spaces.

Logistics Team

Vehicle and machinery inspections and servicing are ongoing. The mechanics helped with the installation of the Knife angel.

Toilets have been busy across the town but especially those in the Quarry.

Playgrounds have been well used, with the Splash Park very busy every day from opening to closure.

Tractor Hedge cutting started at the end of August and will be ongoing till November.

On going programme of Bus Stop cleaning.

Staff assisted with the road closures for the Knife Angel ceremonies.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the update be noted