



Environmental Policy for Estate Grounds Maintenance

At Affinity, we are committed to maintaining the estate grounds in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner. This policy outlines our approach to grounds maintenance, ensuring that our practices minimise our ecological impact while promoting the health and longevity of the estate's green spaces. Our goal is to create an inviting, well-kept environment for all residents while being mindful of our planet. We work with our contractors to achieve this policy.

1. Use of Battery-Powered Tools Over Petrol:

To reduce our carbon footprint and decrease air and noise pollution, we prioritise the use of battery-powered tools in the maintenance of estate grounds. Where possible, we will choose battery-powered lawn mowers, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, and other equipment over petrol-driven alternatives. Battery-powered tools offer the following advantages:

- **Reduced Emissions:** Battery-powered tools produce no direct emissions, helping to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Lower Noise Pollution:** These tools operate more quietly, reducing noise disturbance for residents.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Battery-powered tools are generally more energy-efficient and cost-effective in the long term, offering lower maintenance and operational costs.

We continue to assess our equipment to ensure that we are utilising the most environmentally friendly tools available.

2. Mulching the Grass:

As part of our ongoing effort to reduce waste and improve the health of the estate's green spaces, we employ mulching techniques when mowing the grass. Mulching involves cutting grass in such a way that the clippings are left on the lawn, where they break down naturally.

Why Mulch?

Natural Fertilizer: Grass clippings left on the lawn decompose quickly, returning valuable nutrients to the soil. This reduces the need for chemical fertilisers, which can have negative environmental impacts.

- **Improved Soil Health:** Mulching helps maintain soil moisture, reduces the growth of weeds, and supports beneficial soil organisms such as earthworms.
- **Reduced Waste:** Mulching reduces the need to collect and transport grass cuttings, which would otherwise end up in landfills.

We support sustainable lawn care practices.

3. Utilising Green Waste:

At Affinity, we strive to ensure that all green waste generated during grounds maintenance, such as grass clippings, pruned branches, and fallen leaves, is managed responsibly. We adopt the following practices:

- **Composting:** Wherever possible, green waste will be composted on-site to create nutrient-rich soil that can be used to enhance the estate's flower beds and shrub areas. Composting not only reduces waste sent to landfills but also provides a sustainable source of organic matter for the grounds.
- **Recycling:** Green waste that cannot be composted or reused on-site will be taken to appropriate recycling facilities, ensuring it is processed in an environmentally friendly manner.

By reusing and recycling green waste, we reduce the estate's overall waste and support sustainable practices in grounds management.

4. Policy on Burning Green Waste:

Burning green waste is an inefficient and harmful practice that releases carbon dioxide, particulate matter, and other pollutants into the air. As part of our commitment to environmental sustainability, **we prohibit the burning of green waste** on the estate, except in extreme circumstances where it is necessary for health and safety reasons.

Instead, we will explore alternative options, such as composting, chipping, or hauling green waste to an appropriate facility for recycling. This approach ensures that we are minimising harmful emissions and protecting air quality in the community.

5. Biodiversity and Wildlife Protection:

We recognise the importance of protecting local wildlife and biodiversity while maintaining the estate grounds. To support this:

- We will leave some areas of the estate, such as wildflower patches and undergrowth, undisturbed to provide habitats for pollinators, small mammals, and birds.
- We will minimise pesticide use and opt for natural alternatives whenever possible, reducing harm to beneficial insects and wildlife.
- Our maintenance practices will prioritise preserving and encouraging the growth of native plants, which are better suited to local ecosystems and require less water and care.



6. Water Conservation:

Water is a precious resource, and we strive to manage it wisely:

- We will regularly monitor any estate irrigation system to ensure it is operating efficiently and avoid water wastage.
- We will opt for drought-resistant plants and encourage landscaping techniques that reduce water usage, such as mulching around plants to retain moisture and reduce evaporation.

7. Educating and Involving the Community:

We believe that engaging with residents is key to fostering a shared commitment to environmental sustainability:

- We will regularly update residents on our environmental practices and encourage them to adopt eco-friendly habits in their own gardens and households.

By adhering to the guidelines outlined in this policy, Affinity and our contractors will continue to promote responsible environmental management while maintaining a beautiful, thriving community. We are committed to continuously evaluating our practices to ensure we are doing our part in protecting the environment and preserving the beauty of the estate for current and future generations.

