

Grounds Maintenance

The Team

- 1 lead specialist
- 3 senior specialists
- 3 supervisors
- 2 tractor drivers
- 29 senior gardeners and gardeners
- 2 toilet cleaners
- 1.3 pump crew
- 2 workshop fitters
- 1 estates officer (Otterpool Park)
- 4 arborists
- Up to 24 seasonal staff
- 2 business support officers
- 1 burials officer
- Depots – Oxenden Road, Hawkinge, New Romney, Twiss Road, Kingsnorth & East Cliff



Operations

Parks & Open Spaces fortnightly cuts

Highways 3-4 week cuts*

Rural Routes 3-4 week cuts*

Royal Military Canal management plan

The Coastal Park management plan

The Marsh 3-4 week cuts*

Tractor Drivers support for other teams (grass cutting/watering)

Cemeteries 3-4 week cuts + burials

Pumps preventative and reactive maintenance

Workshop preventative and reactive maintenance

Otterpool Park managed for ecology and development

Sports managed appropriately for sports conditions

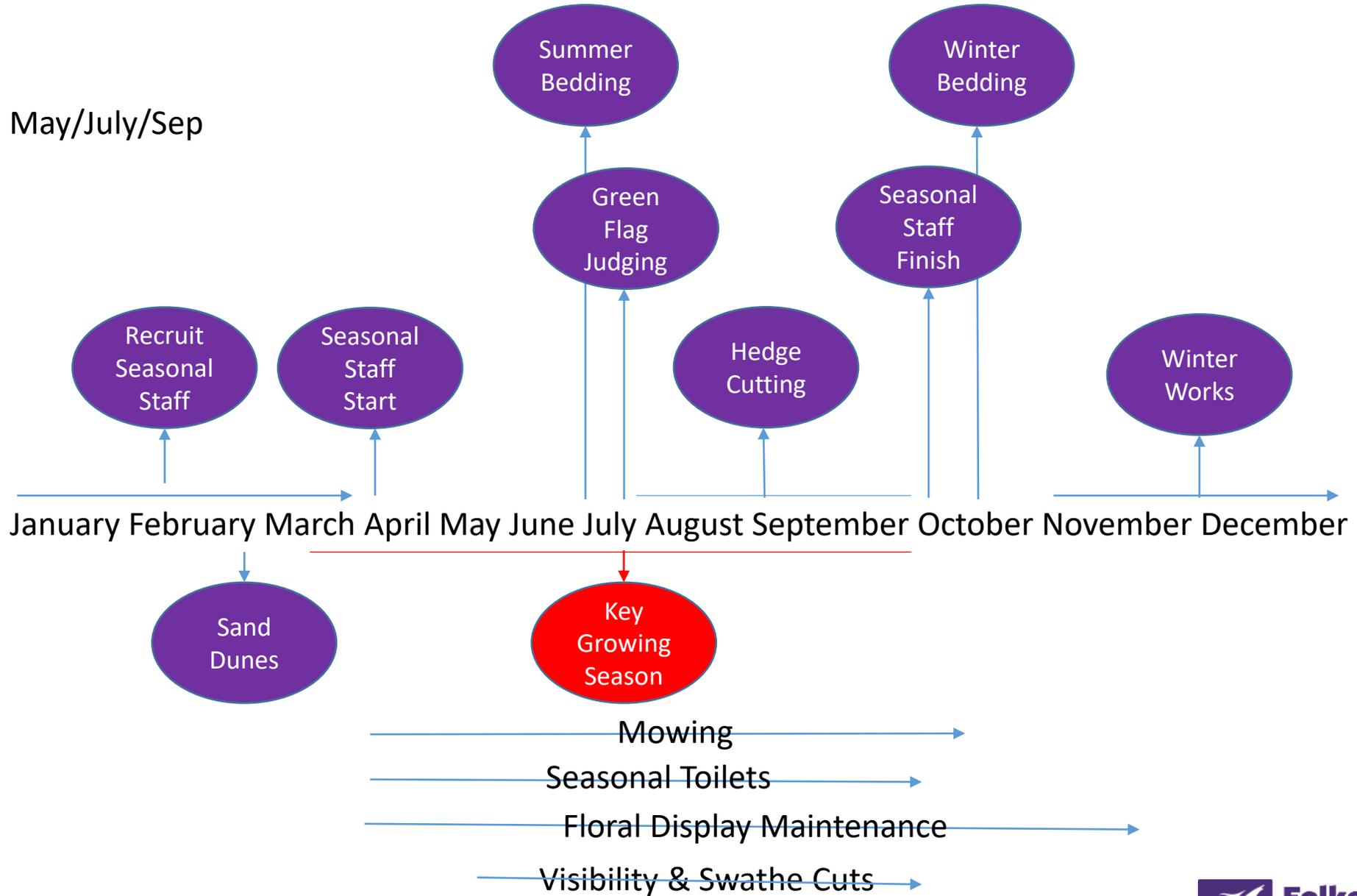
Toilet Cleaning

Tree Team preventative and reactive maintenance

Housing 3-4 week cuts

Kingsnorth Gardens management plan

Park Keeping litter picking, bin emptying



Green Flag Parks

<https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/community/park-information>

- The Lower Leas Coastal Park
- Royal Military Canal
- Radnor Park
- **Kingsnorth Gardens**

“The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.”



Contracts

- FHDC maintains open space on behalf of KCC, Hythe Town Council and FTC.
- FHDC has no control over the KCC, FTC and HTC contracts.
- KCC pay FHDC to undertake verge cutting for a 35 weeks period. This equated to a cut every 5.8 weeks. FHDC subsidises KCC cuts (up to 12) to preserve the appearance of the District.



Nature Reserves

- The Folkestone Warren (SSSI) has been managed by the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership since 1989.
- Greatstone Dunes, Greatstone Beach & The Warren Country Park (SSSI, RAMSAR, SAC) have been managed by the Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership since 2006.



Green Waste and Composting

- 95% of in - house produced green waste is processed (mulched and composted) in FHDC Hawkinge depot.
- In place since 2010, this reduces our need to buy compost or mulch from external companies, reducing transport and waste costs.
- It reduces the need to water newly planted shrubs or bushes by providing a protective barrier.
- The use of mulch reduces the use of pesticides used to stop weeds competing with the new plants.
- In the last year localised composting units have been installed in key areas such as East Cliff and Kingsnorth Gardens. This reduces the need to move the green waste to Hawkinge to be composted.



Biodiversity

There are many locations within the FHDC with a high biodiversity rating.

- **The Royal Military Canal** has been managed to increase the species count for the last 15 years. A biological survey will be carried out this season to show the results of this management programme. The GM teams have been closely working with the BumbleBee and Butterfly and Moths Trusts and spent many volunteering hours planting moths, butterfly and bumble bee friendly habitat.
- **The Warren and East Cliff**, a nature reserve, is rich in biodiversity too, however detailed findings are held by White Cliffs Countryside project.
- **The Coastal Park** has its own wildlife zone, meadow and bee border.



Peat

- The GM department never use raw peat, when purchasing potted plants and other nursery stock including bedding plants, nurseries are asked to supply a certificate stating peat sustainability.
- 60% of summer 2020 bedding plants have been purchased in peat free growing media.
- Tree stock purchased from our preferred supplier has been peat free since autumn 2012.
- Aim to be 100% peat free by 2025.

Seasonal Bedding

- All seasonal bedding is grown in reusable trays, that are sent back to the supplier for reuse.
- All perennial seasonal plants are replanted in various herbaceous borders across the district.



Sedum Roofs

- Sedum matting has been trialled at the Coastal Park on the new operational depot roof. Its benefits include;
- Provision of important microclimate for insects.
- Reduction of the surface run off.
- Significant reduction of heat and the need for air conditioning & provision of insulation in winter (known as green roof insulation).
- Improvement of air quality due to the filtering mechanism of the plants and substrate.
- Installation is very simple - the sedums are grown into felt matting and form a thick blanket of plants that can be rolled out like grass turf on pre-prepared flat roof.
- Watering requirements are extremely low – sedums thrive in dry soils and hate being waterlogged.
- Using Sedum Roofing on the tiered beach chalet roofs as part of the refurbishment program.



Waste management in parks and open spaces

- Our main park are popular spots for family picnics and gatherings.
- Visitors are encouraged to either take their litter home or to use the tin & plastic recycling points and general waste points.
- Big Belly compactor bins (solar powered) - installed 2 years ago. All bins are connected to the selected smart phones and send notifications informing the park keepers it is time they are emptied resulting in less emptying trips.
- So far 190,444 litres of litter have been collected from Big Belly bins (62,573 liters in July).
- 3 double compounds (general waste & recyclables) have been installed to tackle excessive waste in the coastal park.



Tree Stock

- FHDC has 3873 individual trees found within its parks and open spaces.
- There are a further 22201 trees contained within groups and woodlands such as those on the Leas Escarpment and the Royal Military Canal.
- In 2019 GM planted in excess of 1000 new trees.
- Volunteer planting on the Canal (420 tree saplings supplied by the Woodlands Trust will be planted last year)
- Future planting - it is our intention to reduce the number of trees planted in our parks and open spaces over the coming years in order to ensure their establishment.
- We have limited resource available for the watering and aftercare of our newly planted trees and as a result we often end up losing trees due to drought.
- In order to overcome this issue, we will be planting between thirty to forty trees so that we can ensure all of them receive appropriate aftercare and hopefully end up with net gain over the next ten years or so.



Grass Cutting Reductions

- FHDC cut approximately 2million linear metres of grass every 3-4 weeks.
- Plan BEE – working with KCC to support pollinators, we helped identify as part of the original trail 70km on the Marsh to be moved to a reduced mowing regime. Hugely successful this now being moved elsewhere.
- Bee Orchids have been located in sections of urban grass cutting. Grass cutting of this area was ceased immediately and KCC Highways removed this section from the UG maintenance agreement.
- Further 4 sites identified on Folkestone this year with KCC and FTC to be moved to reduced program. A site list to review this winter has been sent through for Hythe
- FHDC's own sites are being reviewed, now being managed, such as wild flow Radnor Park, The RMC etc.



Equipment

- GM has invested in electric equipment where appropriate;
 - 1 long reach hedge cutter
 - 7 hedge cutter
 - 4 drills
 - 5 chainsaws
 - 2 pole saws

The 5 year capital investment plan is due to be rewritten this year, this will ensure environmentally friendly options are adequately investigated.



Any questions?