

Norwich City Council gardening scheme

Mow & Grow

What is the Mow & Grow gardening service?

The scheme offers assistance to tenants who are unable to maintain their gardens due to physical or mental health issues, a disability or long term illness. For some people a one-off clearance might be enough to help them keep their garden tidy, while others may need regular maintenance visits.

The work is carried out by Mow & Grow, which recruits and trains volunteers for community based gardening projects.



**Tenant
approved**



**NORWICH
City Council**

Who can sign up to the service?

To qualify, you must:

- be a Norwich City Council tenant
- not have any relatives or friends living nearby, or household members, who are capable of maintaining the garden
- be in receipt of one of the following benefits:
 - Attendance Allowance
 - Disability Living Allowance (all types)
 - Severe Disablement Allowance
 - Industrial Injuries Benefit
 - War Disablement Pension
 - Long-term Incapacity Benefit
 - Employment Support Allowance (Support Element)
 - Employment Support Allowance (Transitional Element)

If you do not receive one of the above benefits but have health problems or a disability which make it difficult for you to maintain your garden, you may still be considered for the scheme.

How much does the service cost?

Once a referral has been completed by your neighbourhood housing officer we will request a quote for the initial clearance and advise you of the estimated cost before any work is carried out.

You will be able to choose if you wish to go ahead or find an alternative means of clearing your garden. The optional maintenance visits will be available to you whatever you decide and are priced as follows.

Maintenance visits (optional) – £4.30 per week

You will receive six visits per year and the weekly charge is added to your rent account. If you receive housing benefit this amount will increase to cover the full amount of the additional weekly cost.

How do I sign up to the service?

- Contact the customer contact team on 0344 980 3333.
- Speak to your neighbourhood housing officer, sheltered housing support worker or neighbourhood warden.
- Visit City Hall

- Write to the council at Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH
- email info@norwich.gov.uk

A referral can also be made by a friend, relative or support worker using the same contact details.

A neighbourhood housing officer or sheltered housing support worker will contact you to arrange an assessment visit at your home. Please let us know if you require anyone else to be present at the assessment visit for example a support worker, neighbour etc.

The neighbourhood housing officer or sheltered housing support worker will check whether you would like a one-off clearance or ongoing maintenance visits and will ask to see proof of any benefits you receive.

Please be aware: tenants who are in rent arrears are not automatically eligible for the maintenance visits. Each case will be reviewed by the income team.

You will receive a letter after the visit confirming whether you meet the criteria to receive the service and, if applicable, the letter will tell you how to pay for it.

What work will the team do?

The service includes:

- mowing grass
- pruning bushes and low, small branches
- weeding
- strimming (brambles, nettles and overgrown greenery)
- tidying patio areas
- tidying hedges
- removal of green waste, such as bushes, brambles and leaves





Trees – The team will be able to carry out a limited amount of tree work however they will not be able to remove any trees. The team will be happy to remove branches that may cause problems with ongoing maintenance of your garden or to make access easier. Due to preservation orders and health and safety the team will also only be able to maintain hedges and trees which are smaller than 8 foot and have a diameter larger than 6 foot. Where appropriate the team will still be able to complete a side cut to help you manage the growth of your tree or hedge. All work which they complete must also remain within the boundary of the property.

If Mow & Grow is unable to complete tree work please contact Norwich City Council on 0344 980 3333 who will be able to provide advice. The council's current policy states that action will only be taken if a tree is dead, dying, diseased or dangerous. This means, for example, if it is a matter of

access to light, responsibility falls to the individual. It is however still important that you contact our horticultural officers on the above number to ensure you complete the work in the correct manner. If you are in any doubt please call the council on 0344 480 3333.

What work is not included in the service?

- Large scale landscaping or building work, such as paths, fences, paving areas or installing water features.
- Rotavating or garden levelling.
- Removal of hazardous material including glass, sheds with broken panes, toxic liquids / chemicals.
- Non-hazardous waste (apart from green, natural waste) and bulky items will not be removed as part of maintenance visits.
- Communal areas – as a general rule these areas should be maintained as part of Norwich City Council's grounds maintenance service. If an area is not currently maintained, please contact the council on 0344 980 3333 or info@norwich.gov.uk
- Removal of trees, hedges and bushes.

I have received confirmation that I am on the scheme – what happens next?

Everyone accepted onto the scheme will receive a clearance visit. Mow & Grow will contact you to arrange the first visit and discuss the work you wish to have carried out.

If you have also signed up to the maintenance visits you will be sent a notice of rent variation letter. This will tell you that the charge for the service is being added to your rent account in four weeks' time and the start date of the service. If you receive housing benefit, the amount will be increased automatically to cover the cost.

When will I receive my first/next garden visit?

Mow & Grow will contact you the week before the visit in order to add your address to the gardening schedule.

If you are out on the day of the visit a card will be left for you to make contact and rearrange the work. Please let the team know in advance if the time is not convenient, or where there is access to

the garden, if you are happy for the work to be carried out while you are not at home.

If you would like to find out when your next garden visit is scheduled for, please contact Mow & Grow directly on 01603 740107 or email info@thegroworganisation.org

How many garden visits will I receive?

If you are signed up to the maintenance scheme, you will receive six visits throughout the year, usually during the spring or summer months when there is most growth in the garden.

I am worried about the cost of the service

In setting up the scheme we have tried to keep the one-off clearance charge as low as possible. We've spoken to other organisations that run similar schemes to ensure our costs are fair and affordable, making the service as accessible as possible to everyone eligible.

The one-off clearance cost can be paid over the phone or by posting a cheque to City Hall. Although it cannot be covered by housing benefit, it may be possible to pay in

weekly instalments if you are unable to cover the full cost in one go. We will normally ask for a suitable upfront payment before work commences.

If you sign up for the maintenance service a weekly charge of £4.30 will be added to your rent and the charge can be paid altogether in the usual way you pay your rent. If you receive housing benefit, this will also increase by the same amount to cover the cost, so you won't be out of pocket.

I would like to cancel the ongoing maintenance visits – who should I contact?

If you would like to cancel the service, please let us know the reason as we may be able to resolve the problem, and all feedback will help us improve the service.

Please send your cancellation request in writing to:
Mow & Grow, Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH.

Please give four weeks' notice. When the service ends, the maintenance charge will be taken off your rent account.

If you receive housing benefit which covers the gardening charge, this amount will be adjusted automatically.

Who else can offer help if I am not eligible to sign up to the scheme?

If you do not qualify for the scheme it may be worth trying the following options:

- If you are a **housing association** tenant, contact your housing provider directly as they may provide their own gardening scheme
- **Mow & Grow** also provides a commercial service to residents who do not qualify for the scheme. Contact the office on 01603 740107 for garden quotes or by email: info@thegroworganisation.org

Address: Mow & Grow House
Bowthorpe Youth and Community Centre,
Bowthorpe Hall Road,
Norwich, NR5 9AA

The **Norfolk Trusted Trader Scheme** is a Norfolk County Council Trading Standards initiative and builds on the well-established Norfolk Home Call service.

The service ensures Norfolk residents can easily find local, reputable traders. More than 400 local traders and businesses feature in its directory, which can be accessed using the contact details below.

- **Norfolk Trusted Trader Scheme**

Norfolk County Council
– Trading Standards Service,
County Hall, Martineau
Lane, Norwich, NR1 2UD
t: 0344 800 8013
e: trustedtrader@norfolk.gov.uk
[www.norfolk.gov.uk/
trustedtrader](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/trustedtrader)

- **Norfolk Probation Service** offers a free gardening service to people who have no other means of carrying out the work themselves and who have no family living nearby. Please be aware that there is a long waiting list for this service.

To find out more call 01603 724000 or write to:

Norfolk Probation Service,
Community Payback,
Centenary House, 19 Palace
Street, Norwich, NR3 1RT

- The **recycling centre** at Swanton Road in Mile Cross takes a variety of garden/green waste, furniture, electrical goods. Visit the Norfolk County Council website at www.norfolk.gov.uk or call 0344 800 8004 to find out where else you can dispose of rubbish across the city, and what types of items can/not be taken to each centre.
- **Bulky item collection** – to arrange a bulky waste collection please contact Norwich City Council on 0344 980 3333 or email info@norwich.gov.uk



If you would like this information in another language or format such as large print, CD or Braille, please contact Norwich City Council.

t: 0344 980 3333 **f:** 01603 213000

e: info@norwich.gov.uk

www.norwich.gov.uk

