

Why We... Mow, mulch and more

PARKS AND GREEN SPACE MANAGEMENT FACTSHEET



Somerset Regional Council manages 209 hectares of public green space including recreation parks, sports parks, trails and reserves.

To keep the region's public spaces green, clean and user-friendly, Council uses a combination of internal staff and contractors to mow parks, roadsides and town nature strips.

Council also maintains trees and weeds to reduce the risk of fires, to preserve habitat and to protect infrastructure.

How does Council manage green space?

Council applies several factors to determine when, where and how frequently we mow grass.

Mowing is concentrated in the warmer months of October to May and is subject to extreme wet weather or extended hot-dry periods.

Our crews mow less frequently during dry conditions. However, the dry warmer months can result in grass staying shorter with weed and seed heads growing faster than normal, making for an unpleasant overall aesthetic.

Mowing crews focus on higher profile parks which attract more visitors while monitoring other areas like drainage reserves to ensure they maintain a tidy appearance.

Neglecting regular mowing can increase fire risk, open public spaces to potential vermin infestations and may present other risks to the community.

On top of mowing, Council runs a range of vegetation management programs to enhance and protect the environment:

- Each year, free trees are provided to ratepayers to help beautify the region.
- Habitat preservation, including plantings for the benefit of local koala populations.
- The mulching program is held during the winter months to suppress weed invasion.
- Tree pruning reduces the risk of

fires, protects infrastructure and prevents power outages.

Not all invasive weed management involves herbicides – Council uses hand weeding or mechanical aids to keep our parks and reserves weed-free.





PARKS AND GREEN SPACE MANAGEMENT - FAQs



When does mowing and green space work happen?

Maintenance on public green space is done throughout the year, with a focus on mowing between October and May, and a mulching program is held in drier months. If rainfall impacts mowing services, they are rescheduled as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.



Which parks take priority for mowing?

Larger, higher profile parks which attract more visitors are mowed regularly, as well as sport parks and recreation grounds.



My local park is overgrown, why is it taking so long to mow?

Somerset Regional Council manages 209 hectares of public green space including recreation parks, sports parks, trails and amenities reserves. Mowing crews focus on higher profile parks which attract more visitors while monitoring smaller parks with lower visitation. Mowing services may be delayed by other impacts including weather conditions, mechanical break downs or bird nesting seasons.



Where does Council avoid mowing?

Council is unable to mow on steep embankments, slopes and around drains. Residential nature strips (the space between the kerb and residents' property boundaries) are the responsibility of property owners to maintain.



How much does Council spend on mowing and green space management?

Council allocated \$2.8 million, representing about 10% of Councils annual rates revenue in the 2024-2025 Budget, to parks, gardens and cemeteries, which factors mowing and green space management services such as mulching, pruning and weeding.



How long can rain delay mowing?

If rainfall impacts services, they are rescheduled as soon as it is safe and practical to do so. Depending on the severity of a weather event, mowing services can resume as early as the next day or as late as one to two weeks after rain ceases. Crews need to consider safety factors and allow green spaces to dry sufficiently before they can carry on mowing.



What should I do when passing a mobile plant?

Roadside mowing and brush cutting in high-risk areas is conducted with traffic control for the safety of workers, road users and the community. This includes roadsides on the approach into towns in 60-to-100 kilometre per hour zones. Council prioritises both safety and efficiency in its services to ensure traffic impacts are minimal.

