



## **TTSR LTD – Grounds Maintenance Contract – Thetford Castle Park**

Customer Name: Thetford Town Council

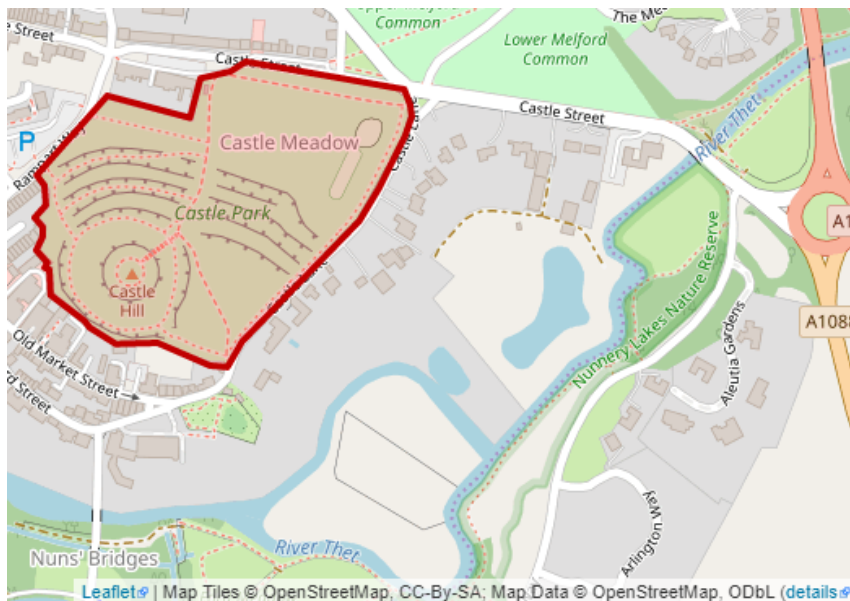
Location: Thetford Castle Park, IP24 2DN

Dates: 2015-2019

Value: £90,000 over 5 years

Main Contractor: TTSR Ltd

Site Map:





### Site Description:

**Thetford Castle Park** is a busy public park in the centre of Thetford. The site is also a nationally significant Scheduled Monument. It contains substantial Iron Age earthworks and a motte and bailey castle constructed following the Norman conquest of 1066. It is the second biggest manmade earthwork in the country behind the Avebury mound in Wiltshire.

It's Scheduled Monument designation carries statutory protection (under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979). This means that any form of penetration below ground level would require obtaining Scheduled Monument Consent from English Heritage. The total area of the park is approximately 53,900 sqm (includes play park).

No scoring or marking of the grass surface could be caused because of the archaeology on site and great care had to be taken not to erode any of the mound or ramparts.

### Initial Considerations:

During the site induction, the TTSR team were briefed on the historic importance of the site and the care that must be taken to preserve the site itself, and to make it both tidy and safe for those who visit it.

The presence of the general public had to be considered carefully. Castle Park has a little bit of everything; from a scheduled ancient monument to a child's play park on site. It has something for all the family and is quite the attraction in Thetford. Therefore, working conditions would be tricky as it is a very busy place. Litter picking and regular mowing and strimming with large self-propelled machinery would have to take place early in the morning before the heavy footfall arrived at the location. The cutting of the mound needed to be carried out immediately after the Summer holidays, since during the 6 weeks holiday it was busy with picnics and football. Once the holidays had finished the site was quieter and we could close areas off whilst we carried out the works.

### Site Works:

Grass cutting of the ramparts: these were cut once a year in September to 2cm or less. As it was an annual cut of the mound and ramparts, we had to be aware of wildlife and anything that could be nesting in the long grass. We found that running a machine through the paths helped clear the active wildlife in the grass.

Grass cutting of the mound: this was cut once a year in September to 2cm or less. Stumps of the scrub were treated with systemic herbicide. The ivy perimeter had to be constrained within the existing boundaries and care was taken to ensure it did not spread and cause damage to the earthworks. The gradient of the mound is substantial and therefore works could only be attempted in dry and bright conditions to ensure the safety of staff members. However, we have since acquired a bank mower, which would enhance team safety and ability to cut in less favourable circumstances.

Access pathways through the ramparts were cut and maintained: this was completed in fourteen cuts annually. It was important to consider the safety of visitors on the site; any long, wet grass or uneven ground could cause accidents on such a gradient.







Litter picking of the whole grounds was completed three times a week; inclusive of the mound and play area to maintain the area's natural beauty and protect any passing wildlife from items left behind that could endanger them.

Grass cutting of the bluebell wood: this was only mown after the bluebells had finished flowering to allow visitors to experience maximum enjoyment of this area, and then to preserve the cycle of reflowering the following season.

Litter bins, including dog bins were emptied at least three times a week to ensure litter bins were always available for use. Build-up of any rubbish would have a negative impact on visitors, and the local wildlife and had the potential to encourage infestations.

TTSR Ltd is proud to have been part of the maintenance and display of such an iconic landmark.



