



**WITNEY**  
TOWN COUNCIL

APPOINTMENT  
OF  
**MAINTENANCE & GROUNDS OPERATIVE**

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

November 2022

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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for responding to the Town Council's recent advertisement for the full-time position of **Maintenance & Grounds Operative**.

We trust that you will find this Recruitment Information Pack of assistance in deciding to apply.

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If you would like to apply, please complete the attached application form (CVs alone will not be acceptable) and submit it marked **PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL** by email, or print and post by **12NOON ON MONDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2022** to the email/postal address above.

The Recruitment Information Pack will not form part of any subsequent contract of employment.

If you have any questions or would like an informal discussion on this role please contact Angus Whitburn, Operations Manager on 07423 124006.

If you have a disability or impairment and you would like us to make any special arrangements concerning the completion of your application form or attending for interview, please do let us know.

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# **1. WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL HISTORY**

## **The Council**

Witney Town Council was created in 1974 following the reorganisation of local government and the disbanding of Witney Urban District Council and is the largest parish within West Oxfordshire.

The residents are represented by 17 Councillors (covering 6 wards) each elected for a term of four years, the next elections being in May 2023. Each year the Council elects from amongst its Members the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and Leader.

## **Functions of the Town Council**

The Town Council is responsible for the maintenance of many acres of public open spaces and numerous small areas of grass, shrubs and trees situated on the scattered housing estates and the inner town sites. These include three parks and recreation grounds, a Lake & Country Park, and two cemeteries. There is also allotment land on four separate sites around the town.

The sports and recreational facilities consist of cricket pitches, football pitches, bowls greens, tennis courts, an adventure golf course and children's play areas, with the tennis courts and adventure golf being run by an external party.

In addition, there is a Country Park of 29 hectares which includes a lake which has been developed by the Council to provide a natural environment for more tranquil leisure pursuits.

The Council has recently brought its grounds maintenance back in house after being contracted out for over 25 years. Currently there is a direct workforce of nine permanent staff who undertake general maintenance of the Council's buildings and facilities as well as general grounds maintenance of sports and amenity areas.

The Council owns and administers two public halls, the Corn Exchange in the heart of Witney and the self-contained Burwell Hall on the Thorney Leys Estate. The Council also owns the Langdale Hall and Madley Park Hall which are both currently run by external parties.

Many small operations – street furniture, tree planting and floral displays complete the readily identifiable Council's functions, although the Council interests itself in anything that enhances the Town appearance and the pleasure of the townspeople.

Often the Town Council works in partnership with other authorities and local organisations, in particular West Oxfordshire District Council.

## **Provision of Services**

In addition to the Town Council, Witney is served by West Oxfordshire District Council for services including the collection of Council Tax, refuse collection, environmental health, planning, leisure centres, etc. and Oxfordshire County Council provides education, social services, libraries, roads, street lighting, etc. Services provided by the Town Council include:

- Planning consultation
- Management of assets, e.g. allotments, lake & Country Park, parks and open spaces etc.
- Management of the Town Hall
- Provision of two public halls – Burwell and the Corn Exchange
- Management of the Tower Hill and Windrush cemeteries
- Administration of committee services
- Civic Functions

Further information and the latest news on Witney Town Council can be found on the website [www.witney-tc.gov.uk](http://www.witney-tc.gov.uk).

## 2. JOB DESCRIPTION – MAINTENANCE & GROUNDS OPERATIVE



|                         |                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Reporting to:</b>    | Senior Maintenance Operative                                                                                                |
| <b>Responsible for:</b> | No direct responsibilities                                                                                                  |
| <b>Hours:</b>           | 37 hours per week                                                                                                           |
| <b>Grade/Salary:</b>    | SCP 9 – 12 Currently £23,194 to £24,496 per annum<br>[with possible advancement to discretionary SCP 13/14 £24,948/£25,409] |
| <b>Location:</b>        | Based at The Leys or Windrush Depot                                                                                         |

### **Job Summary:**

The post holder will be required to carry out general ground & building maintenance across the Council's estate under the direction of the Senior Maintenance Operative/Operations Manager to ensure a high standard of public service is provided at all times.

### **Duties:**

#### **Cemeteries and Play areas**

The Council operates 2 active cemeteries, 2 closed church yards and 10 play areas.

- Undertake the excavation, ceremonial prep and backfill of burials in the cemeteries.
- Ensure burial books are always completed and up to date.
- Ongoing maintenance of graves including topping up soil, removing restricted items and when required communicating this compassionately with cemetery visitors
- Complete weekly and quarterly play area safety checks.
- Perform basic repairs to play equipment.
- Maintenance all play areas surfaces through cleaning, repairs, and infilling with loose material.

#### **Recreation Grounds & Amenity Land**

Witney Town Council maintains 5 recreation grounds across the town along with many pockets of amenity land.

- Perform grass cutting duties with a range of heavy and light plant equipment.
- Litter collection including dog waste bins, and general litter picking.
- Hedge cutting & leaf clearance
- Sports pitch line marking
- Sports equipment set up and set down
- Installation of street furniture

## **Fine Turf**

The full maintenance requirements of 2 cricket squares and 2 bowling greens are the responsibility of the town Council.

- Follow a detailed specification issued by line manager for the maintenance of fine turf areas.

## **Horticulture**

Great pride is taken in the towns tree planting and maintenance, and the flower arrangements and their maintenance.

- Planting bedding flowers in line with issued layout plans.
- Ongoing maintenance of flower beds and hanging baskets including watering and debris removal.
- Cross cutting, removal and processing of any fallen trees and limbs.
- Planting and ongoing maintenance of trees.

## **Lake & Country Park**

The Town Council owns and maintains the lake and country park in Witney that consists of a lake and two large meadows along with other parcels of land.

- Assisting the Park Ranger in a range of required maintenance such as fencing, bank stabilisation, tree works and habitat creation
- Maintaining footpaths through vegetation clearance and laying new limestone paths

## **Building Maintenance**

- Prep and paint a range of surfaces across the Council buildings, exterior and interior.
- Undertake simple repairs and review required works to report to a Line Manager of requirements.
- Like for like electrical and plumbing installations.
- Deep cleaning of areas not within the remit of the Council's cleaners.
- Assist in the set-up of large events and when required support caretaking duties.

## **Events**

- Be available to work for large event including Remembrance Sunday and Christmas lights switch on.
- Set up of safety precautions.
- Safely manage road closures and communicate effectively with residents.

## **Vehicles & Equipment**

- Drive a range of different sized vans and safely secure payloads.
- Towing of trailers
- Drive a range of plant equipment on public highways and through tight areas that require good vehicular control.
- To carry out routine maintenance and repair work to the Council's vehicles, plant and general equipment and report any defects to Line Manager.

## **General**

- To instruct and provide guidance to Trainees, temporary employees, volunteer workers and work experience students as required.
- Be responsible for themselves and other staff directly supervised in the following key areas: time keeping, reporting accidents and incidents, completion of time sheets, responsible for assets and tools in their control and ensuring the correct PPE and uniform is worn and used.
- To be an appointed person responsible for employee basic first aid and to ensure first aid boxes within the Works Department are kept fully stocked. You will be expected to hold the one day course for 'First Aid for the Appointed Person' certificate.
- To participate in any call-outs and out of hours works if required due to vandalism, public safety or property security.
- To respond to members of the public in a professional and polite manner.
- To maintain records as required of vehicles, plant and personal time sheets.
- To participate in additional training as identified and show a commitment to continuous development.
- To carry out other duties allocated in connection with the operational activities of the Council as directed which are commensurate with the post.

## **Health and Safety**

Be conversant and comply with Health and Safety regulations applicable to the organisation. Take reasonable care of yourself and others affected by your work activities, use equipment correctly and apply safe working practices effectively to remove or minimise risks of accidents or injury and to meet statutory obligations.

## **Fairness and Dignity at Work**

Actively support the Council's Dignity at Work policy to assist in eliminating discrimination and in maintaining a fair, positive and productive working environment, to meet statutory obligations and good employment practice.

*This job description is provided to assist the post holder to know main areas of responsibilities. These may be amended from time to time, without change to the level of responsibility appropriate to the grade of the post*

### **3. PERSON SPECIFICATION**

#### **Essential**

- Physically capable of performing a range of physical duties.
- Willingness to work in all weather conditions
- Good knowledge of general DIY skills
- Good knowledge of a range of small and large plant equipment
- Basic understanding of a home garden requirements, seeding, mowing etc.
- To be available to respond to out of hours emergencies if required
- Holder of a current, clean UK driving licence
- Able to work as part of a team and individually under limited supervision
- Willingness to obtain further work-related qualifications or undertake training as the opportunity arises
- To be available to respond to out of hours emergencies if required

#### **Desirable**

- Experience in towing
- Prior workplace training in health and safety subjects such as manual handling, asbestos awareness and working at heights.
- Qualifications in any of the following areas
  - First aid at work
  - Cross cutting and chainsaw maintenance
  - Woodchipper
  - Any grounds care machinery
  - Sports pitch line marking
  - Heavy plant qualifications, 360 excavators, tractor driving and dumper
  - Any trade qualifications, plumbing, electrical, welding, carpentry, bricklaying, or painting
- Any prior experience in cemetery operations and/or play area maintenance

## 4. TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

|                             |                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Post Title:</b>          | Maintenance Operative                                                                                                               |
| <b>Salary Grade:</b>        | SCP 9 – 12 Currently: £23,194 to £24,496 per annum<br><br>[with possible advancement to discretionary SCP 13/14<br>£24,948/£25,409] |
| <b>Place of Employment:</b> | The Leys or Windrush Depot                                                                                                          |
| <b>Hours of Work:</b>       | 37 hours per week (flexibility is required as some evenings and weekend work will be required, and on-call/call-out)                |

*As part of the Open Space Strategy the Council is operates some of its services at weekends there may be a requirement for the post holder to either work at weekends or work additional hours, for which the relevant remuneration will apply.*

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Employment Status:</b>     | Permanent                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Pay Period:</b>            | Monthly                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Pay Arrangements:</b>      | Salary will be paid by BACS into a bank or building society account, on or before 25 <sup>th</sup> of the month.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Allowances:</b>            | Casual user car rates at NJC approved rates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Annual Leave:</b>          | 23 working days, rising to 28 working days after 5 years continuous Local Government Service (plus 1 extra statutory day at Christmas) plus Bank Holidays.                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Pre-employment checks:</b> | Any offer of employment will be subject to two satisfactory references being received (one from the present or previous employer), and satisfactory DBS check<br><br>The Council reserves the right to arrange a medical check                                                                                  |
| <b>Probation Period:</b>      | Six months                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Notice Period:</b>         | The appointment is subject to one months' notice on either side                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Conditions of Service:</b> | Unless specified to the contrary, the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, National Agreement on pay and conditions of service.                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Pension Scheme:</b>        | Employees with a contract of employment for three months or more are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme which is administered on behalf of the Town Council by Oxfordshire County Council. In view of this arrangement the Town Council does not provide a facility for Stakeholder pensions. |

Contributions range from 5.5% - 12.5% of whole-time equivalent salary plus pensionable allowances, and are assessed annually in accordance with the Council's Pensions Policy Statement and the following table [2022/23]:

| <b>Band</b> | <b>Whole-time equivalent pay range<br/>(based on pensionable earnings)</b> | <b>Employee<br/>Contribution<br/>rate (%)</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1           | Up to £15,000                                                              | 5.5%                                          |
| 2           | £15,001 to £23,600                                                         | 5.8%                                          |
| 3           | £23,601 to £38,300                                                         | 6.5%                                          |
| 4           | £38,301 to £48,500                                                         | 6.8%                                          |

Further information on the Local Government Pension Scheme can be found at <https://www.lgpsmember.org/thinking-joining.php>