

Report Purpose:

Introduction to Ranger Policy

Background

Macclesfield Town Council's Ranger Service plays a vital role in enhancing the town's public realm and supporting the local community environment.

As the service has become more established, the team has developed an understanding of recurring issues and community needs. This has enabled a more proactive approach, with regular revisits to key locations that they know get neglected to help maintain standards and address issues.

The development of this policy has become necessary in response to increasing queries from stakeholders, including members of Cheshire East Council, regarding the scope and nature of the ranger service's work. While the examples within this report demonstrate the breadth and value of the service, much of the team's day-to-day activity is responsive, varied, and not always easily defined into rigid categories.

Roles and responsibilities of rangers

The ranger team undertakes a wide range of duties that contribute to the upkeep and enjoyment of public spaces. These responsibilities include:

- Litter picking
- Grounds maintenance
- Pathway upkeep
- Graffiti removal and minor repairs
- Wildflower planting
- Britain in Bloom maintenance
- Supporting volunteers and community groups
- Allotment maintenance
- Maintenance of signage where appropriate

In addition to the above, a significant proportion of the team's work involves supporting and delivering tasks on behalf of Cheshire East Council. This includes responding to issues in public spaces and addressing gaps where additional resource is required. For example, the rangers have worked to keep Sparrow Park as tidy as possible despite ongoing anti-social behaviour, including clearing and restoring bins after fire damage. They have also cleaned and refitted a damaged bin on Mill Street and another example is clearing branches and debris left following tree works. Plus they do all of the weeding in the town centre.

The team also undertakes practical maintenance on behalf of the Town Council, such as fencing repairs on allotments. Delivering these tasks in-house has improved efficiency and generated cost savings by reducing reliance on external contractors.

Activity overview

Over the past year, the ranger service has carried out a significant number of tasks to maintain and improve the town's environment.

The total recorded ranger jobs from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 is 938.

Below is a breakdown of the types of tasks completed:

Litter picks completed - 324
Grounds maintenance tasks – 274
Community engagement/Britain in Bloom - 131
Repairs and infrastructure jobs – 110
Office/Event support – 64
Allotment maintenance – 35

Total = 938

Below is a breakdown of the amount of jobs completed in each ward. Please note that the total amount of jobs completed in the wards is in excess of the amount of tasks completed above as some tasks are completed in more than one ward. For example watering of plants.

- Central – 673
- South – 132
- Tytherington – 128
- Broken Cross and Upton – 109
- East – 98
- West and Ivy – 97
- Hurdsfield - 75

These figures demonstrate the breadth of work undertaken and the team's consistent presence across Macclesfield.

Conclusion

The attached policy is intended to provide greater clarity around the role of the rangers, particularly in light of stakeholder queries. At the same time, it recognises that the nature of the work cannot always be defined in strict terms, and that flexibility and professional judgement are essential to effective service delivery.

Action

To consider the attached draft ranger policy.



MACCLESFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN RANGER POLICY



Document Version Control

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Macclesfield Town Rangers

Operational Work Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the range of operational duties undertaken by the **Macclesfield Town Rangers** in support of the maintenance, improvement and presentation of Macclesfield's public spaces. The Rangers provide practical support to enhance the town environment, assist with community initiatives, and help maintain public areas to a high standard. They do not replace statutory services provided by Cheshire East Council or any other public authority.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Macclesfield Town Rangers team and outlines the types of tasks they may carry out across areas managed or supported by the Town Council. Work will be undertaken in accordance with relevant health and safety procedures, environmental standards, and any required permissions from landowners or partner organisations.

3. Statutory Responsibilities and Partnership Working

Macclesfield Town Rangers operate in a supportive capacity and do not hold responsibility for statutory duties assigned to other authorities, including those under the remit of Cheshire East Council. Statutory functions such as highway maintenance, keeping highways clear, and the cleaning and maintenance of permanent street signage remain the responsibility of Cheshire East Council.

Where appropriate and within available resources, the Rangers may assist with activities that contribute to these functions—such as litter picking, clearing minor obstructions, or cleaning removable signage. This assistance is discretionary and does not replace or transfer responsibility from the statutory authority. All such work will only be undertaken where it is safe, authorised, and within the operational scope of the Rangers.

3. Core Responsibilities

The Macclesfield Town Rangers may undertake the following duties as part of their operational work programme.

3.1 Environmental Maintenance

The Rangers support the upkeep and cleanliness of the town centre and surrounding areas through:

- Litter picking across public spaces and town centre locations
- Cleaning footpaths and paved areas
- Scraping and clearing alleyways
- Removing weeds in planted areas
- Leaf blowing during seasonal periods
- Weed spraying where appropriate and authorised



- Power washing surfaces including pavements and street furniture
- Removing graffiti where feasible and appropriate

3.2 Grounds and Landscape Maintenance

The Rangers assist in maintaining green spaces, planting areas and general landscaping through:

- Strimming grass and vegetation
- Hedge cutting and trimming overhanging hedges
- Planting and maintaining wildflower areas
- Supporting Britain in Bloom initiatives and floral displays
- Planting summer and winter bedding in designated areas
- Watering planters, flower beds and community planting schemes

3.3 Public Realm Improvements

The Rangers contribute to improving the visual appearance of the town by:

- Painting benches and other street furniture
- Painting street signs where authorised and able to remove
- Cleaning road signs and public signage
- Maintaining and enhancing public allotment sites

3.4 Community and Events Support

The Rangers provide practical assistance for town council and community events, including:

- Transporting equipment and materials
- Assisting with the set-up and dismantling of event infrastructure
- Moving items and providing general logistical support

3.5 Minor Maintenance Tasks

The Rangers may undertake small maintenance tasks to support the operation of Town Council facilities, including:

- Small office maintenance jobs
- Basic repairs and upkeep tasks where appropriate

3.6 Tasks rangers cannot carry out

- Any work on private property
- Any tree work, tree surgery or arboricultural operations large scale weeding across the town
- Re-painting signs that cannot be removed for painting
- Statutory highway maintenance or repairs
- Large-scale or programmed cleansing or maintenance works
- Works outside approved risk assessments or training
- Any activity that creates a reasonable expectation of statutory service provision



3.7 Request Handling

Where requests are received from Councillors, members of the public, or stakeholders:

- Matters that fall within the remit of Cheshire East Council or another statutory authority should first be reported through the relevant official reporting channels
- The Town Council may also receive requests directly; however, if the matter is statutory in nature, the requester will be directed to the appropriate authority in the first instance

Town Ranger involvement will only be considered where:

- The issue has been reported to Cheshire East Council, or
- Cheshire East Council has confirmed it cannot reasonably address the issue in an appropriate timeframe, or
- The matter is assessed as a minor, low-risk enhancement suitable for discretionary Town Ranger support

The Town Council reserves the right to refuse any request where it considers:

- The work is a statutory duty of another authority
- The request would create precedent or expectation of ongoing service delivery
- The work is operationally, financially, or reputationally inappropriate

Controlled Intervention

Where Town Rangers undertake work that overlaps with statutory functions, it will only be where:

- The activity is minor and exceptional
- It provides clear local environmental benefit
- It does not replace statutory service delivery
- It is not part of a routine expectation

Such intervention is discretionary and will always remain limited in scope.

4. Vehicle Operation

Designated Rangers may drive Town Council vehicles as part of their duties. All drivers must:

- Hold a valid driving licence
- Be authorised by the Town Council
- Comply with all vehicle use, maintenance and safety policies

5. Health and Safety



All work undertaken by the Rangers will comply with relevant health and safety legislation and council policies. This includes:

- Appropriate training and use of equipment
- Risk assessments where required
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Safe handling and storage of chemicals and machinery

6. Environmental Responsibility

The Rangers will carry out their duties with consideration for environmental sustainability, biodiversity, and the protection of wildlife habitats wherever possible.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Town Council to ensure that it continues to reflect operational needs and best practice.