

Thame Town Council

Pesticide Policy

1. General

1.1 The Council is committed to undertaking maintenance of its parks, open spaces and other areas of responsibility by using methods which have minimum damaging impact on the natural environment. In keeping with this the Council will:

- Keep pesticide use to a minimum, and only used if absolute necessary.
- Increase the use of green recycled waste as mulch, reducing the need for the use of herbicide on shrub beds and hedge lines.
- Reduce the need for chemical application by using horticultural techniques and actions in the first instance, reducing the need of chemical application.

2. Weed Control

2.1 It is a legal requirement and Good Practice that those who use pesticides aim to minimise pesticide use in public spaces. Herbicides are the primary plant protection products used in the UK. Glyphosate has been used to control weeds for over three decades, and is the predominate herbicide applied in the amenity sector.

2.2 Glyphosate herbicide will be used to suppress weeds on hard surface areas, shrub beds, obstacles and fence lines and is effective only on weeds that have already emerged above ground level. The herbicide is absorbed through the leaves into the plant. It is inactivated when it comes into contact with soil; it is not easily leached and is unlikely to contaminate ground water and does not harm wildlife or pets if used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. An alternative herbicide may be sought if a different treatment is required for a specific problem.

3. Approved Pesticides

3.1 The Council will only use UK government approved pesticides and comply with the Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012 governing the use of pesticides. Pesticides will be checked against a database of authorised pesticide products on the Pesticides Register Database which can be accessed on The Health and Safety Executives website.

4. Training

4.1 Any employee engaged to apply pesticides will have the correct formal training and specified certification to apply pesticides properly and safely complying with Health and Safety legislation.

5. The Grandfather Rights Exemption

- 5.1 Under the previous UK legislation governing pesticide use, only those born before 31 December 1964 who used an agricultural product on their own or their employer's land were exempt from the requirement to hold a certificate of competence. Since 26 November 2015 everyone who uses a professional product, including those who previously relied on "grandfather rights", must hold a specified certificate.

6. Storage, Handling and Disposal

- 6.1 The Council will take reasonable precautions to ensure that: storage, handling and disposal of products, their remnants (old products and unused tank mixes) and packing; and cleaning of equipment do not endanger human health or the environment. The following measures will be undertaken:

- In the case of non-professional products - following instructions on storage and disposal of the product in accordance with instructions on the product label.
- In the case of professional products - identifying and mitigating any risks; and following good filling, storage and disposal practice.
- Limited stock will be held on any pesticide product to ensure that it is used by the expiry date.
- Any pesticide product found to be identified as being withdrawn from use will be used prior to other products serving the same purpose that are authorised for use, up to being withdrawn from use.
- Should a product become withdrawn from use, any remaining product will be disposed of via an authorised hazardous waste carrier.

7. Record Keeping

- 7.1 Records of pesticide applications will be kept for a minimum of 3 years and will detail: date, location, area covered, operator and weather conditions.

8. Future Design and Planning Considerations

- 8.1 Where opportunity exists to influence the design of new features or modify existing ones on Council property, control of weeds will be considered when determining materials, siting, angles etc. This may include ground covering plants and using asphalt instead of paving slabs.