**Ashworth Mansions Limited, London W9**

**Regular garden maintenance**

Ashworth Mansions Limited (AML) is seeking expressions of interest to maintain the gardens of the Estate. It is intended to appoint contractors within the next three months.

**The Gardens**

Ashworth Mansions consist of two blocks of approximately 55 flats each fronting Elgin Avenue and Grantully Road W9, with a central garden between the blocks.

*Elgin Avenue Gardens*

The frontage on Elgin Avenue consists of a central garden area with a paved area providing entrance to the flats. The garden consists of lawn, clipped cotoneaster and beds planted principally with roses, lavender, narcissus and pelargoniums (in summer) and cyclamen (in autumn – spring).

Either side of the main area are 4 smaller beds planted with perennials and ground cover roses. There are also clipped shrubs adjoining the flat entrances. Along the frontage there are also pollarded plane trees (maintained by specialist tree surgeons).

*Grantully Road Frontage*

Along this frontage are planted a number of shrubs. It is intended to replant this area as soon as some major works to the flat entrances and lower areas has been completed (expected by the Spring of 2017) but maintained meanwhile.

*Central Garden*

Approximately 0.5 acre mature garden with trees, shrubs and perennials, 9 defined beds and amenity grassed area. Residents hold keys for the use of the central garden and some seating and tables are provided for their use.

**Philosophy**

The gardens at Ashworth Mansions are much valued by the residents and the Board is looking for gardening contractors who have the necessary skills and resources to maintain the gardens and to follow a programme of gradual improvement and renewal.

The gardens on Elgin Avenue and Grantully Road are principally to complement the appearance of the flats and enhance the environs. The central garden provides a quiet oasis for residents to look at from their flats and to provide a place for residents to sit out, enjoy the plants and to have lunches and dinners in the summer months. Children play in the garden, but there is no segregated play area and dogs, bicycles and ball games are not permitted in the gardens.

A specified member of the AML Board is designated responsibility for the gardens and liaison with gardening suppliers (The Garden Representative). They are supported by an informal garden committee of interested residents. Appointment of contractors is subject to a consultation with residents and formal approval by the Board.

**Gardeners**

We are looking for gardeners who have the necessary skills and resources to maintain the gardens and to follow a programme of gradual improvement and renewal, where necessary. Desirable characteristics

* qualified in horticulture
* knowledgeable
* suitably experienced
* reliable
* passionate
* flexible
* up to date with relevant law, rules and regulations
* possess necessary permits and certificates (e.g. spraying, waste)
* aware of health and safety procedures
* in possession of professional grade tools and machinery
* fully insured for the tasks undertaken

**SPECIFICATION**

1. LAWNS

1. Regular mowing of the lawn areas throughout the growing season, usually once per week, less when appropriate owing to weather conditions and at end of season. Grass clippings to be removed from lawn with each cut and put in composting bins on site.
2. The edges of the lawns against the beds to be trimmed once per two cuts.
3. At least one application of a Spring/Summer lawn fertiliser and one of an Autumn/Winter lawn fertiliser. Further applications may be applied depending upon weather and growth conditions, as appropriate.
4. Spray lawns with selective lawn weed killers as necessary to check spread of weed infestations, but the general aim is not to keep lawns completely weed free. Application as required of moss killer (prior to scarifying).
5. Power scarification of lawn areas as required to remove thatch and moss.
6. In areas of compaction, aerating with a hollow tine spiker, filling in with a sandy top dressing.
7. In areas where damage has occurred, bare patches worn etc. repair by over-seeding and top dressing where necessary.

2. BEDS

1. All beds to be kept weeded as necessary so as to keep essentially weed free by digging, hoeing or hand weeding
2. Pruning of shrubs to be carried out in accordance with normal horticultural practice as required according to season and variety.
3. Hedges and screens to be trimmed regularly so as to keep compact and of neat appearance.
4. Regenerative pruning to be carried out from time to time within the normal routine maintenance contract and agreed with the Garden Representative in advance.
5. Occasional spraying for major infestations of pests and diseases on perennials, roses and shrubs. Note that routine spraying on a regular basis is not required so as to keep to a minimum the quantity of pesticides used in the garden. However, it is not required that the garden be run on organic principles.

3. ANNUAL BEDDING

1. Seasonal displays of bedding plants to be planted twice annually to the beds on the Elgin Avenue frontage and to the knot garden in the central garden.
2. Planting pattern and plants to be agreed in advance with the Garden Representative.
3. All bedding to be deadheaded, picked over, watered and fertilised as necessary to maintain the quality of display.

4. AUTUMN LEAVES

1. Leaves are to be removed from the lawns weekly during the Autumn leaf fall season.
2. A thorough removal of remaining leaves from beds, bases of shrubs, hedges etc. to be carried out once they have all fallen.
3. Leaves to be composted in the purpose built container mixed together with grass cuttings and other compostable garden refuse.
4. Composted leaves etc. to be spread as mulch on the garden beds at the end of Winter.

6. RUBBISH REMOVAL

1. Removal of any garden debris arising out of routine maintenance (prunings, deadwood etc.), which is not suitable for composting.
2. All grass clippings and leaves to be composted for reuse in the garden.

7. OTHER OPERATIONS

1. The bases of trees to be kept free of suckers.
2. Compost container and its surrounds to be kept clean and tidy.
3. Watering to be carried out during site visits (using Ashworth Mansions on-site hoses and watering sprinklers) as necessary to grassed areas and to newly planted shrubs, perennials and bedding plants.
4. Consult with the Garden Representative of Ashworth Mansions on a regular basis (minimum quarterly) on condition of garden, planned maintenance and any improvements, planting proposed etc.
5. Any work proposed to be carried out in addition to the base specification should be agreed in advance with the Garden Representative, including a written specification and price quotation. Quotation/estimates to be given free of charge.

8. ADDITIONAL POINTS

1. Access to all areas can be provided between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00. Gardeners should check in with the on site caretaker’s office on arrival.
2. Works are not permitted at weekends, except by special arrangement.
3. Motorised machinery, leaf blowers etc. must not be used before 09.00
4. There is a small garden shed where tools, fertilisers etc. can be stored, but it is expected that larger equipment items will be brought on-site as required and removed on the same day.
5. All work to be carried out by direct employees of the contractor and not by subcontracted firms or persons except by specific agreement with the Garden Representative. We prefer a continuity of personnel, who get to know the garden, at least at the supervisory level.
6. Full Public and Employers liability insurance is required for all of the contractor’s employees working in the garden. We shall require a copy of the relevant current certificate to be provided each year.
7. All work to be carried out with regard to the appropriate Health and Safety regulations both for employees and for users of the garden.
8. All spraying and other application of fertilisers and chemical products to be carried out by direct employees holding the appropriate certificates of competence.

9. CONTRACT CHARGE

1. The contract will initially be for one year. The agreed contract cost will be divided by 12 and paid at the end of each month worked and will be the same fixed monthly charge despite the fluctuations in the hours worked over that period.
2. Invoices should be submitted to our Managing Agents, who will make payment monthly.
3. Payment for fertilisers, grass seed, bedding plants, mulches etc. are subject to agreement whether to be included in the contract price or not.