

A WORKS CO. MANUAL · NO. 12

The Lawn Care & Treatment Works

*How to build a recurring treatment round, one lawn
at a time.*

The Works Co. · Trade manuals

A Works Co. manual · No. 12

A plain, honest guide to building a certified lawn-treatment round in the UK — the recurring programme, the renovation upsells, and the dense local book that pays you year after year.

The Works Co., 2026 edition. No. 12 in the Works Co. trade series.

The manual was the asset all along.

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How to use this manual

You bought a business education for £47. Treat it like one. This is not a brochure and it is not a pep talk. It is the working knowledge of someone who has run a lawn-treatment round — what to do, when to do it, what it costs, and what it earns — written down so you do not have to learn all of it the hard way.

A lawn-treatment business is a real trade with a real backbone: a scheduled annual programme of feeds, weed control and moss control, sold to homeowners who want a green, healthy lawn and have neither the time nor the knowledge to do it themselves. The money sits in the recurring round and the renovation upsells, not in mowing. To do it properly and legally you will need to be certified to use professional products. None of that is a reason to stop. All of it is in here.

Read it in two passes

The first pass is a straight read, cover to cover, in the order the chapters come. Do not stop to act on anything yet. You are building a map — how the business fits together, why density matters, where the compliance sits, how the numbers work. Read it like a story and let it settle. It will take an evening or two.

The second pass is slow and with a pen. Go chapter by chapter and do the work each one asks of you. Score yourself honestly in Chapter 2. Set up the business in Chapter 3. Cost your kit in Chapter 4. Build your first-customer plan in Chapter 6. By the end of the second pass you should have a registered, certified, insured business and a plan to put treatments on lawns. The first pass tells you whether to do this. The second pass is doing it.

The Toolkit

With the manual you have a 10-file Excel toolkit. These are not decorative spreadsheets. Each one is built to do a specific job in the business, and each chapter tells you which file to open and when. The Self-Assessment Scorecard helps you decide if this is for you. The Pricing Calculator stops you underpricing a lawn. The Customer Job Database is your round, your treatment history and your routing in one place. The COSHH Risk Assessment keeps you legal and safe with chemicals. The First 90 Days Checklist turns Chapter 14 into a list you tick off. Open each file as its chapter introduces it, and keep them on the device you carry. Appendix A lists all ten with a line on when to use each.

The Prompt Library

You also have a library of 60 AI prompts. These are ready-written instructions you paste into an AI assistant (the free tools are fine) to do the slow desk work of a small business quickly and well: writing quotes and proposals, drafting the spring sign-up campaign, replying to enquiries, writing lawn-advice posts, handling a complaint, building a leaflet. They are written in our voice and tuned to this trade. You do not need to be good with AI to use them — you copy, paste, fill in the gaps, and check the result before it goes out. Appendix B explains how. Chapters point you to the relevant prompts as they come up.

Free updates for life

The trade moves — products change, rules tighten, robotic mowers spread, customer expectations shift. When we update this manual, you get the new edition free, for as long as the manual exists. You bought the current thinking and you keep getting it. No renewal, no subscription.

If it is not for you

We would rather you spent the £47 on a coffee with someone you love than on a manual for a business that was never going to be yours. So the refund is simple and same-day. Email refunds@theworksco.co.uk, say the word "refund", and we send your money back the same day we read it. No form, no phone call, no reasons demanded. Keep the manual, the Toolkit and the Prompt Library — they are yours either way. We would rather lose the £47 than have you feel you wasted it. Read Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 first; by the end of them you will know.

Now turn the page and let us look at why lawn treatment is a business worth building.

PART ONE

The Foundations

The Lawn Care Opportunity

It is a Monday morning in late April, just gone half seven, and Gavin is parked on a quiet cul-de-sac in Telford with a calibrated spreader in the boot and a flask of tea going cold on the dashboard. By the time most people on this street have left for work, he has treated three lawns. By lunch he has done eight. Spring feed, selective weed control where it was needed, a quick note through each door saying what was applied and to keep pets off the grass until it dries. Eight lawns, each one signed up to an annual programme paying between £150 and £250 a year. Most of those customers were still in bed. None of them watched him work. All of them will pay, on time, by Direct Debit, the same way they did last year and the way they will next year.

That is the business. Not the drama of a garden makeover. Not a van full of mowers and strimmers. A quiet, repeatable round of lawns that need feeding and keeping clean of weed and moss, visited four to six times a year on a schedule you set, billed on a programme the customer barely thinks about once they have said yes.

This chapter is about why that round is worth building, who it suits, who it does not, and how the rest of this manual, the Toolkit and the Prompt Library fit together to help you build it.

Why treatment, not mowing

Most people, when they picture a lawn business, picture mowing. Someone turning up every fortnight in summer to cut the grass. It is honest work, but it is the wrong end of the market if you want a business that pays well and holds together.

Mowing is low-value and weather-bound. You are selling time and a machine. The customer can see exactly what you did, can compare you to the lad down the road who does it for a tenner less, and can cancel the moment the grass stops growing in October. The money is thin and the loyalty is thinner.

Lawn treatment is a different trade. You are not selling time, you are selling a result the customer cannot get on their own: a thick, green, weed-free lawn, kept that way across the year by someone who knows what they are doing. This is the GreenThumb model, the lawn-treatment round, and it works for four plain reasons.

It is recurring. The backbone is an annual treatment programme, typically four to six visits a year. Spring, early summer, late summer and autumn feeds, with selective weed control and moss control folded in where the lawn needs them, plus a lighter winter treatment to

keep things ticking and spread your income across the cold months. Once a customer is on the programme, they stay on it. You are not re-selling every visit. You earn the money once and collect it for years.

It routes densely. A treatment visit on a small-to-medium lawn takes minutes, not hours. When your customers are clustered on the same streets, you treat many lawns in a morning with barely any driving between them. That density is where the margin lives. A scattered round burns fuel and daylight; a dense round prints money. Think about Gavin's Monday: eight lawns in one cul-de-sac and the streets either side of it. Now picture the same eight lawns spread across eight villages. Same work, same revenue, but half the day lost to the steering wheel. The lesson runs through everything in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7: you do not just want customers, you want customers near your other customers.

The customer is time-poor and willing. Your buyer is the homeowner who wants a lawn they are proud of but has neither the hours nor the knowledge to feed it, identify the weeds, get the moss out and time it all correctly. They will happily pay someone competent to take it off their hands. There are a great many of these people, and they tend to live next door to each other. They are not haggling over a fiver; they are buying back their weekends and a lawn that makes the front of the house look cared for. That is a buyer worth having.

It carries upsells. On top of the programme sit the renovation jobs: aeration, scarification, overseeding, top dressing, plus lawn pest and disease treatment and hard-surface weed control. These lift the value of each customer well beyond the base programme, and you sell them to people who already trust you.

COACH MOMENT Write this on the inside cover of your work diary: *the sale is the programme, not the visit*. Every time you are tempted to quote a one-off treatment, stop and quote the year instead. A £30 one-off is a transaction. A £180 annual programme is a customer for the next five years. The whole of this business is the difference between those two sentences.

What you actually sell

Keep the offer clear in your own head, because a confused operator confuses the customer.

The core product is the **annual treatment programme**: four to six visits a year, each a feed plus selective weed control and moss control as the lawn needs them. A single treatment visit on a small-to-medium lawn sits at **£20 to £45**. Bundled into a programme, that comes out at roughly **£120 to £300 or more per lawn per year**, priced by the area of the lawn. Larger lawns are priced up per square metre. That programme is your recurring backbone and the number you should be growing every week.

Around it sit the renovation upsells, priced as separate jobs:

Service	Typical price (2026)
Single treatment visit (small-medium lawn)	£20-£45
Annual treatment programme (per lawn)	£120-£300+
Aeration	£40-£90
Scarification	£50-£120
Overseeding	£40-£100
Top dressing	priced by area

You do not need every one of these on day one. The programme is the foundation. The renovation work, covered properly in Chapter 5 and Chapter 12, is how you grow the value of customers you already have without finding a single new one.

The three income brackets

Here is the honest shape of what this can earn, so you can decide which version you are building. These are UK figures for 2026.

Part-time round: £10,000 to £25,000 a year. Evenings and weekends, or a few mornings, alongside another job. A few hundred lawns is a long way off; you are running a modest book that pays for itself and then some. Plenty of people start here and stay here on purpose, because it suits their life.

Full-time solo: £30,000 to £60,000 a year. One person, one van, a dense treatment round. This is the target for most readers of this manual. The margin is good once the round is dense, because your costs per lawn fall as the lawns cluster together and the programme revenue keeps arriving whether the phone rings or not.

With staff or multiple vans: £100,000 to £250,000 or more in revenue. Now you are running a small operation: two or more vans, employed and certified operators, the bigger machines, and a manager's job rather than a sprayer's. The work changes character entirely, and Chapter 11 deals with it honestly, including the part where you stop being the person with the sprayer.

None of these brackets is the "right" one. They are choices. The mistake is drifting between them without deciding.

MENTOR MOMENT I have watched people quietly clear £45,000 from a one-van round and sleep well, and I have watched others chase the six-figure number,

hire too early, and end up earning less than the solo operator while carrying twice the worry. The dense solo round is one of the most underrated small businesses in the country. Do not feel you have failed if you never buy a second van. Density and retention beat size nearly every time.

Who it suits

Be honest with yourself here. This trade rewards a particular sort of person.

- You are **methodical and like routine**. The programme runs on a calendar; the routing runs on discipline. People who enjoy a system thrive.
- You are **happy to get certified and handle chemicals properly**. Professional weed and moss control means professional products, and that means certification and care. More on this in a moment.
- You are **comfortable outdoors in most weather**, across a spring-to-autumn main season.
- You are **steady with customers** without needing to be a salesperson. The before-and-after results and the consistent green lawn do most of the talking.
- You **like learning the craft**: grass types, soil, thatch, moss, diagnosing what a lawn actually needs. Get the agronomy right and customers stay for years.

Who it does not suit

Just as honestly:

- You **will not get spraying-certified**. Then this is not your business, because applying professional herbicides legally requires it. This is not optional and not negotiable.
- You are **careless near pets, children, ponds and watercourses**. Chemical application demands respect. If that sounds like a chore rather than a duty of care, walk away.
- You **want money this week**. A treatment round is built, not switched on. The recurring income is glorious once it exists, and slow to arrive at first.
- You **dislike the science**. If learning why a lawn is yellow bores you, the customers will eventually notice, and the round will not hold.

There is no shame in any of these. We would genuinely rather you spent the £47 you paid for this on a coffee with someone you love than on a manual for a business that was never going to be yours.

A word on the rules, so nothing surprises you later

You will read the full compliance detail in Chapter 3, but understand the shape of it now, because it is the backbone of doing this properly.

To apply professional weedkillers you must be a qualified, competent user. The recognised route is the **City & Guilds (NPTC) PA1 certificate plus PA6** for knapsack and handheld spraying. This is a legal requirement for professional products, not a nice-to-have. On top of that sits **COSHH** for storing, mixing, applying and disposing of chemicals safely, the correct PPE, and proper protection of people, pets, ponds and watercourses. You will carry **public liability insurance** plus cover appropriate to chemical application. And you will choose **sole trader or limited**, register with HMRC, and keep an eye on the **£90,000 VAT threshold** as you grow.

None of this is a wall. It is a gate, and getting through it is one of the things that separates a real operator from the bloke with a bag of feed from the garden centre. The certification and the care are part of your moat.

How to use this manual, the Toolkit and the Prompt Library

You own three things, not one. Use all three.

The manual is the craft and the business, in order. Part One sets the foundations. Part Two is the kit and the agronomy. Part Three, which includes Chapter 6 on getting your first twenty customers, is the make-or-break section and the longest in the book. Parts Four to Seven take you into commercial work, scaling, the add-on stack, the 2026 tech stack, the first ninety days and the decade ahead. Read it through once, then keep it on the passenger seat and return to chapters as you hit them.

The 10-file Excel Toolkit is the manual made practical. The self-assessment scorecard (Toolkit 01) goes with Chapter 2. The accounting tracker (Toolkit 02) with Chapter 3. The Job Database CRM (Toolkit 03), the Pricing Calculator (Toolkit 04), the quality standards (Toolkit 07), the proposal template (Toolkit 08) and the 90-Day Checklist (Toolkit 10) all have their home chapters. Do not rebuild these from scratch. They exist so you can start working, not spreadsheet-building.

The 60-prompt AI Library does the writing and thinking you do not have time for: quotes, customer messages, the spring sign-up campaign, lawn-advice content, cold approaches to commercial sites. Where a chapter leans on a prompt, it says so. Used well, it saves you an evening a week.

A reminder on the deal: the bundle is **£47**, with a same-day, no-friction refund if it is not for you (email refunds@theworksco.co.uk and keep the materials), and **free updates for life**.

What success looks like in one year

Picture Gavin again, this time a year on, the following spring.

He registered with HMRC, passed PA1 and PA6, sorted his COSHH and insurance, and bought a calibrated spreader and a knapsack sprayer, hiring the aerator and scarifier when a renovation job came in rather than buying them on day one. His total setup came in well inside the £1,000 to £4,000 range. He spent his first season getting customers clustered on lawn-heavy streets, one referral pulling in the next-door neighbour, the before-and-after photos doing the selling.

Now he has a book of customers on the annual programme. The round is dense enough that his Monday looks like the one we opened with: eight lawns before lunch, little driving, the money arriving by Direct Debit whether or not he picks up the phone. The renovation upsells, scarification and overseeding through autumn, aeration in spring, have lifted what each customer is worth well beyond their base programme. He is comfortably inside the full-time solo bracket and building toward the top of it.

He is not rich. He is something better at this stage: in control of a real, recurring, properly run business that gets a little denser and a little more valuable every week.

That is the opportunity. The next step is deciding, honestly, whether it is yours. Chapter 2 will help you do exactly that.

Is This For You?

It is a wet Wednesday in late February, and Sue is sitting in her kitchen in Chester with a mug of tea going cold and a notepad in front of her. She has spent the morning reading about lawn treatment as a business. The numbers look good. A full-time round in her part of the world might pay £30,000 to £60,000 a year once it is dense, built on customers who pay £120 to £300 a year each and mostly never cancel. She has a decent-sized garden, she likes being outdoors, and she is tired of a job that keeps her at a desk.

What she is doing now is the most useful thing anyone can do before spending a penny on this trade. She is asking herself, honestly, whether it actually suits her. Not whether the money is real — it is. Whether the work, the certification, the chemicals, the seasons and the routine are a fit for the person she actually is, rather than the person she imagines on a sunny day in June.

This chapter is here to help you do the same. We would rather you read it, decide this is not for you, and walk away £47 lighter at most, than have you sink a few thousand pounds and a year of your life into a business that was never yours to enjoy. So this is the honest mirror. Hold it up before you read another word about kit or customers.

What this trade actually is

Before the green lights and the red flags, be clear about what you would be signing up to, because a lot of people picture the wrong job.

This is a **certified, chemical-handling, seasonal round that rewards density and retention**. Read that sentence slowly, because every word in it is load-bearing.

Certified. Applying professional weedkillers and treatments is not the same as mowing or strimming. To use professional plant-protection products legally you must be a qualified, competent user. The recognised route in the UK is the City & Guilds (NPTC) PA1 plus PA6 spraying certificates. This is a legal requirement, not a nice-to-have, and Chapter 3 covers it in full. There is no version of this business where you skip the certification and apply professional herbicide anyway. If that is your plan, stop reading and ask for your refund.

Chemical-handling. You will store, mix, measure and apply professional products, near people, pets, ponds and watercourses. That comes with COSHH responsibilities, correct PPE, safe disposal, and a duty of care you cannot be casual about. Most days it is routine and entirely safe. It is routine and safe precisely because the operator treats it seriously every single time.

Seasonal. The work has a clear rhythm. There is a spring-to-autumn main season when grass is growing and treatment demand is high, and spring in particular is peak sign-up time. The annual programme deliberately spreads visits across the year — including a lighter winter treatment — so your income is steadier than a pure summer trade, but it is not flat. You will be busier in May than in January, and you need to plan and price for that.

Rewards density and retention. The money is not in doing one spectacular lawn. It is in doing many lawns close together, year after year, on a programme they do not cancel. A customer three minutes from the last one, paying £180 a year for the next six years, is the whole game. Chapters 6 and 7 go deep on this. For now, just know that the business rewards patience and tight routing far more than it rewards a single big job.

That is the real shape of the work. Now, is it your shape?

Green lights: signs this could be a strong fit

Read these honestly. You do not need every one, but the more of them ring true, the better your odds.

You are methodical and like getting things right. Calibrating a spreader, measuring a lawn, mixing a product to the correct rate, keeping treatment records — this is a trade for people who take a quiet satisfaction in doing a job properly and consistently. If you would rather a thing be right than fast, that is a green light.

You genuinely enjoy outdoor, physical work. Not the idea of it. The reality: rain, wind, cold mornings, a heavy knapsack on your back, walking lawns all day. People who are happiest outside and come home tired-but-content do well here. People who romanticise it from indoors often do not last the first wet fortnight.

You are willing — keen, even — to get spraying-certified. The certification is not a hurdle to resent. It is the moat that keeps the careless and the casual out of your market. If you see the PA1/PA6 as a professional credential worth having rather than red tape to dodge, you have the right attitude for the whole trade.

You are good with routine and routing. This is a round. The same lawns, the same streets, the same seasonal cycle, planned tightly so you are not wasting fuel and daylight. The operators who do best treat their map and their schedule as the core of the business, not an afterthought — they know which streets they are on which week, they cluster their visits, and they shave the dead miles out of every day. People who like a plan, a schedule and an efficient day thrive. People who need constant novelty struggle with the repetition.

You are comfortable with customers. You will knock on doors, do free lawn analyses, explain in plain words what is wrong with someone's grass, and recommend a programme.

You do not need to be a natural salesperson, but you do need to be able to stand on a stranger's lawn, look them in the eye, and be honest and useful. Quiet competence sells this service better than patter.

You are happy to keep learning the science. Grass types, soil, thatch, moss, weeds, disease, the right feed at the right time — the agronomy is real and it matters (Chapter 5). The operators who keep customers for years are the ones who actually understand lawns, not the ones who just spread something green and hope. You do not need a degree in it. You need the curiosity to keep reading product labels, watching how lawns respond to what you do, and getting steadily better at diagnosis. The science is learnable by anyone willing to pay attention to it.

You can handle being judged by results. A lawn is visible. Your work sits in someone's front garden for the whole street to see, and the customer compares this June to last June. There is nowhere to hide a poor job. People who find that motivating — who want their work to be plainly good — do well. People who find that kind of accountability stressful should weigh it honestly now.

COACH MOMENT — score yourself before you spend Do not just nod along to these. Open the Self-Assessment Scorecard (Toolkit 01) and score yourself honestly against each green-light and red-flag marker. It takes ten minutes and it forces you past the warm glow of "I think I'd like this" into a number you can actually look at. Be tougher on yourself than you want to be. The scorecard is not there to talk you into the business — it is there to tell you the truth while it is still free to hear it.

Red flags: signs to think hard, or walk away

These are not all equal. Some are deal-breakers. Some are just things to go in with your eyes open about. We will be plain about which is which.

You will not get certified — deal-breaker. If you are looking for a way to apply professional products without the PA1/PA6, there is no business here for you. There are amateur, consumer-grade products that do not require certification, but a professional operator charging professional prices must be properly certified. If the certification is a no for you, this trade is a no for you. That is the end of it.

You are careless with chemicals near pets, ponds and people — deal-breaker. This work puts you next to children's play areas, dogs, garden ponds, and the drains that feed watercourses. If you are the kind of person who cuts corners, skips the PPE because it is a faff, or cannot be bothered to read a product label properly, you will eventually cause harm

and you will deserve the consequences. This is not a trade for the slapdash. If that stings, good.

You want instant income — think very hard. The first twenty customers are slow and hard-won (Chapter 6 is the longest chapter in this manual for exactly that reason). A part-time round earns £10,000 to £25,000 a year, and a full-time round £30,000 to £60,000, but the recurring strength builds over seasons, not weeks. If you need significant money next month, this is the wrong starting point. The annual programme is a backbone you grow, not a tap you turn on.

You dislike the science and the learning — think hard. If reading about soil pH, thatch and selective herbicides makes your eyes glaze, you can still scrape by, but you will be the operator who loses customers because the lawns do not actually improve. The people who keep dense, loyal rounds are the ones who found the agronomy genuinely interesting. If you find it a chore, be honest about whether you will keep up with it once the novelty wears off.

You hate routine and want every day to be different. A treatment round is, by design, repetitive and route-driven. That repetition is where the money is. If you know about yourself that you need constant variety, this will grind on you, and a bored operator is a sloppy operator. There is some variety in the renovation work — aeration, scarification, overseeding — but the base of the business is the same cycle, repeated well, season after season.

You are not physically up for it, or have not checked. A loaded knapsack sprayer is heavy, and you carry it across lawns all day. There is bending, walking, lifting machines in and out of a van, and doing it in weather. None of this is extreme, but it is real, daily physical work. If you have a back problem or a level of fitness you have not honestly examined, do that before you commit, not after you have bought the kit.

MENTOR MOMENT — the honest "no" is a good outcome In years of watching people come into this trade, the ones who fail expensively are almost never the ones who lacked talent. They are the ones who knew, somewhere, on a wet Wednesday in February, that they did not really want to spray chemicals in the rain for a living — and bought the van anyway. If this chapter has quietly told you this is not your trade, that is not a wasted £47. That is the cheapest, fastest business lesson you will ever buy: the one that saves you the £3,000 of kit and the year of half-hearted effort that would have followed. Walking away clear-eyed is a win, not a failure.

The honest reality, in one paragraph

Here is the trade without the gloss. You will get certified, which costs a few hundred pounds and some study. You will handle chemicals responsibly, every day, forever. You will work outdoors through a season that peaks in spring and summer and quiets in winter. You will spend a slow, hard first year knocking on doors and building your first twenty customers, mostly clustered into a few good streets. And if you do all that properly, you will end up with a dense recurring round of people who pay you year after year, barely think about it, and refer their neighbours. The reward is real and durable. The path to it is patient, technical and physical. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling you something — and so are we, so weigh it for yourself.

Where to go from here

If the green lights outnumbered the red flags, and the honest-reality paragraph reads like a description of a life you would actually enjoy, then this manual is for you. Chapter 3 sets up the business properly — sole trader or limited, HMRC, the £90,000 VAT threshold, and the compliance spine of certification, COSHH and insurance. Then Chapter 4 gets you kitted out and Chapter 5 teaches you the agronomy. From there it is customers, pricing and the work itself.

But before you turn the page, do the scorecard. Score yourself honestly against the markers in this chapter, look at the number, and decide.

MENTOR MOMENT — decide on the page, not in your head Do not carry this decision around as a vague feeling. Write it down. Fill in Toolkit 01, total it up, and put a date next to it. People who make this choice deliberately, on paper, either commit properly and build a good round, or step away cleanly and lose nothing but an afternoon. People who leave it as a maybe tend to drift in half-committed, which is the most expensive way of all to find out the answer.

A note on the refund, because you should know it

We mean the £47 honestly. This manual, the 10-file Excel toolkit and the 60-prompt AI library cost forty-seven pounds, once, with free updates for life. If you read this chapter, do the scorecard, and decide this trade is not for you, email refunds@theworksco.co.uk and we will refund you the same day, no questions and no friction. Keep the materials — they are yours regardless.

We would genuinely rather you spent the £47 on a coffee with someone you love than on a manual for a business that wasn't yours. There is no version of this where we want your money for a trade you will not enjoy or stick at. So use this chapter for what it is: a free, honest filter, paid for by a refundable forty-seven pounds. If it sends you away clear and

certain, it has done its job. And if it leaves you more sure than ever that this is the work for you, then turn the page — there is a business to set up, and the next chapter is where it starts.

That was Chapter 1.

The other twenty chapters, the Excel toolkit and the
AI prompt library are in the full bundle.

theworksco.co.uk/lawn-care · GBP 47 · refund without friction