



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Order Form – Contract for Research and Development Goods and/or Services

1. Purchase Order Number	To be provided by the Defra Contract Manager within 10 working days of contract award
2. Customer	Defra, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF
3. Contractor(s)	Simon Christmas Ltd, 31-35 Great Ormond Street, London, WC1N 3HZ, 6546353
4. Co-Funder(s)	N/A
5. Defra Group Members	The following Defra Group members will receive the benefit of the Deliverables: Environment Science and Analysis
6. The Agreement	<p>This Order is part of the Agreement and is subject to the terms and conditions appended at Appendix 1 and shall come into effect on the Start Date.</p> <p>Unless the context otherwise requires, capitalised expressions used in this Order have the same meanings as in the terms and conditions.</p> <p>The following documents are incorporated into the Agreement. If there is any conflict, the following order of precedence applies (in descending order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) this Order;b) the terms and conditions at Appendix 1; andc) the remaining Appendices (if any) in equal order of precedence.
7. Deliverables	Goods: None
	Services: See Appendix 2: Specification/Description – Section 5. Outputs and timetable
8. Milestone Delays (Clause 18.2.10)	N/A
9. Start Date	13 th May 2024
10. Expiry Date	31 st March 2025
11. Extension Period (Clause 5.2)	Extension Period – Option to extend for 6 months + 6 months

19. Progress Meetings and Progress Reports	As indicated in the specification, tenderers will provide details of their proposed project management arrangements and set out their quality assurance processes and standards, to be discussed at the inception meeting. At this stage, Defra envisages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Contractor shall attend progress meetings with the Customer every two weeks The Contractor shall provide the Customer with progress reports every two weeks		
20. Address notices for	Customer: <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Contractor: <div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	
21. Key Personnel of the Contractor	<div><div></div><div></div></div> <div><div></div><div></div></div> <div><div></div><div></div></div>		
22. Procedures and Policies	For the purposes of the Agreement: The Customer's protection and security requirements are contained in Clause 15. Protection and security of data of the Research and Development Terms and Conditions. The Customer's sustainability policy can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/about/procurement#sustainable-procurement The Customer's equality and diversity policy can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/about/equality-and-diversity		
23. Commercial Exploitation (Clause 11)	Clause 11 (Commercial Exploitation) shall apply to this Agreement: Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
24. Special Terms	N/A		
25. Additional Insurance	N/A		
26. Further Data Protection Provisions	The further data protection provisions as contained at Annex 1 of the Terms and Conditions are applicable to this Agreement where indicated below:		

	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Signed for and on behalf of the Customer	Signed for and on behalf of the Contractor
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Appendix 1: R&D Terms and Conditions

The Customer's Terms and Conditions which can be located on the [Defra Website](#) and which are called '[Research and Development Terms and Conditions](#)'

Appendix 2: Specification/Description

1. Summary

The aim of this contract to undertake research to improve understanding of nature-based activity providers' participation in green social prescribing (GSP), including barriers and enablers for success, to support cross-government policy to roll out and scale up these interventions.

The project will explore challenges and solutions and identify examples of good practice including in relation to link workers and other referral mechanisms; providers' capacity, skills and training requirements; access to appropriate green space; funding and wider sustainability; and data collection processes and information flows.

The project will build on work being undertaken as part of the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health through Green Social Prescribing Project funded through HMT's Shared Outcomes Fund.

The contract is expected to last approximately 11 months, from May 2024 to March 2025. With the extension option of 6 months + 6 months. The following key outputs are required:

- A scoping report by 7th June 2024
- An interim report approximately half way through the project in October 2024 - the date for this is flexible and can be moved depending on the overall proposed programme of work
- The final report and Research Briefing in March 2025

The guide price for the project is £70k-£100k and we will consider bids across this full range. As indicated in the tender evaluation section of this specification, costs will be given a weighting of 25% and all tenders will need to demonstrate value for money.

Defra would welcome proposals from independent bidders and consortia for this project.

2. Research aims and objectives

This contract aims to improve understanding of nature-based activity providers' participation in green social prescribing, including barriers and enablers for success, to support cross-government policy to roll out and scale up these interventions. The research should engage with a sample of nature-based activity providers, including large and small organisations with different levels of current engagement in green social prescribing, and providing a variety of activities for adults and children with a range of mental and physical health needs.

The project will explore challenges and solutions and identify examples of good practice including in relation to link workers and other referral mechanisms; providers' capacity, skills and training requirements; access to appropriate green space; funding and wider sustainability; and data collection processes and information flows.

The objectives of the project are:

- **Objective 1:** To work collaboratively with national, regional and local partners and stakeholders to undertake scoping and further development of the research design following contract award

Scoping should include interviews or similar with partners and stakeholders to understand their needs and views in relation to the project, as well as a light-touch evidence and good practice review

- **Objective 2:** To undertake in-depth research to improve understanding of nature-based activity providers' participation in green social prescribing

The project should deliver high quality, in-depth research with nature-based activity providers and other key stakeholders as required to help understand barriers and enablers to participation in green social prescribing.

It may be helpful to engage some larger nature-based activity providers at national level, as well as using a case study approach to engage at local level and understand barriers and enablers in a range of contexts.

The research should include nature-based activity providers with experience of green social prescribing to identify success factors, as well as organisations who are less or not currently engaged to help understand barriers.

The project should include research with organisations providing services for children and young people to improve understanding of barriers and enablers for organisations working with these groups.

The project should improve understanding of different stages of the green social prescribing pathway and the challenges and opportunities experienced at each stage from a provider perspective, for example:

- Engaging with the green social prescribing system
- Receiving and managing referrals from different sources
- Providing and tailoring activities for different groups of service users, including adults and children with a range of mental and physical health needs
- Monitoring and evaluation and demonstrating impact

- **Objective 3:** To share learning and good practice from the research to inform policy and practice

The project should share existing learning and good practice from the research, including findings from the evidence review, as well as evidence generated through new primary research. This is likely to include presenting at appropriate events and may include organising specific events as part of the project. Specific outputs (e.g., briefings) may be required to aid dissemination at events and/or for specific audiences. Findings should be shared to inform policy and practice during the project, as well as through dissemination towards the end of the contract

- **Objective 4:** To provide a high quality final research report and other outputs to communicate findings to policy, delivery and evidence audiences

The project should provide a high quality final report and outputs in different formats tailored to the needs of key policy and practice audiences across the green social prescribing system. Further detail on the outputs required is provided in section 5. As indicated in section 6, Defra intends to publish the final report from this project and may wish to publish other outputs, e.g., as annexes to the final report

3. Background

3.1 Policy context

Defra is committed to supporting the roll out and scaling up of green social prescribing.

The Department supported the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill-health through Green Social Prescribing Project¹, together with other national partners including Department of Health and Social Care, Natural England, NHS England, Sport England and the National Academy for Social Prescribing. The first phase of this cross-governmental initiative launched in October 2020 with funding of £5.77m, £4.27m of which came from HMT's Shared Outcomes Fund. The first phase used a strategic cross-sector partnership to enable whole system change by delivering: scaled-up green social prescribing in seven test and learn site locations; four clinical research studies into the effectiveness of GSP; research into scalability and public perceptions of GSP; and high quality process, outcome and value-for-money evaluation. By effectively implementing GSP, the project aimed to improve mental health outcomes, reduce health inequalities, reduce demand on the health and social care system, and develop best practice at a local level. The delivery programme ended on 31st March 2023, with the evaluation continuing to 30th June 2023.

Defra and other national partners submitted a bid to HMT's Shared Outcomes Fund for extension funding. If this bid is successful, the second phase of the project will run from April 2024 to March 2025, with the evaluation continuing to June 2025. We would commission work across the seven existing Test and Learn sites to deliver a range of activities designed to address evidence gaps around GSP, particularly related to value for money, and to develop models for how to address persistent barriers to spread and scale of GSP at a national level.

We would commission work in the following key areas:

- Developing the value-for-money model towards a cost-benefit analysis, including exploring health service demand, comparative costs and benefits versus other interventions and ability to address health inequalities
- Data tracking through the full GSP pathway, to understand end-to-end experience, and develop models for how to link data up across the whole GSP system and demonstrate sustained outcomes
- Building models for sustainable funding, including through activity provider collaboratives, shared investment models and procurement models that work for GSP.

In the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill-health through Green Social Prescribing Project, green social prescribing involves supporting people to engage in nature-based interventions and activities to improve their mental health. Social Prescribing Link Workers and trusted professionals in other allied roles connect people to voluntary organisations and community groups for practical and emotional support, based on a 'what matters to you' conversation. There are four 'pillars' of social prescribing that Link Workers connect to: physical activities, arts/cultural activities, debt and other practical advice, and nature-based activities.

There are many different types of nature-based outdoor activities and therapies that people may reach through a social prescription. The activities vary but can include elements of

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-sites-to-test-how-connecting-people-with-nature-can-improve-mental-health>

conservation, horticulture and gardening, care farming, exercise and sport, creativity and arts, and talking therapies.

3.2 Evidence background

This project builds on previous evidence commissioned by Defra on ‘Nature-based social prescribing for diagnosed mental health conditions in the UK’² and on research and evaluation undertaken as part of the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill-health through Green Social Prescribing’ Project, and will complement the extension if our bid to HMT’s Shared Outcomes Fund is successful.

As noted above, the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill-health through Green Social Prescribing Project includes process, outcome and value-for-money evaluation, led by University of Sheffield. The interim evaluation report³ produced in January 2023 and published on the Defra Science Search site includes some findings on nature-based activity providers’ participation in green social prescribing, for example:

- Preventing poor mental health, and maintaining good mental health, were commonly seen as important outcomes by nature-based providers. However, most providers also recognised clear benefits of nature-based activities for everyone regardless of condition, rather than being limited to specific health conditions or needs
- It is currently unclear whether the myriad challenges faced by providers and Link Workers across the nature-based system are due to lack of availability or capacity, or a lack of connectivity, and what factors contribute to this variation across the system
- The scale and spread of organisations providing or able to provide nature-based activities is not necessarily known by those who may be able to make referrals, such as NHS social prescribing teams
- Relationships between link workers and provider organisations are often the method by which referrals are made, but individual connections are fragile, and risk being lost when people move on, change roles or external pressures change priorities within the system
- Precarious, short-term funding cycles and lack of system level support for the VCSE sector is a barrier to sustainability and embedding GSP within statutory systems

We expect to publish the final evaluation report from the first phase of the project on the Defra Science Search site before the end of March 2024, on the same page as the interim report.

As part of the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill-health through Green Social Prescribing Project, DHSC commissioned Natural England to undertake an assessment of national GSP delivery capacity in the green sector to inform strategies to scale up GSP. DHSC also commissioned IFF Research to explore perceptions of GSP, barriers and ways of encouraging uptake among clinicians and the public. The findings from these projects were published in March 2023 on GOV.UK^{4,5}.

There is a wide range of evidence on links between natural environments and health, in relation to social prescribing and more broadly. For example, NHS England commissioned a review⁶

² <https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectId=20263>

³ <https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectId=20772>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-green-social-prescribing-delivery-capacity-assessment>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-social-prescribing-perceptions-among-clinicians-and-the-public>

⁶ https://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk/media/zakn0rng/how-the-natural-environment-can-support-health-and-wellbeing-through-social-prescribing_.pdf

and briefing⁷ on how natural environments can support health and wellbeing through social prescribing. In November 2022, Natural England published summaries of evidence on links between natural environments and mental⁸ and physical⁹ health.

4. Methodology

Tenderers should propose methods which meet the full range of aims and objectives set out in this specification.

This section is intended to provide guidance to tenderers. Overall, Defra does not wish to be prescriptive in terms of the methods used in this research and welcomes ideas from bidders. However, proposals should ensure that the methods themselves, and the rationale for the chosen methods, are clear and explicit.

4.1 Evidence and good practice review

Defra anticipates that the project will include a light-touch evidence and good practice review, collating existing qualitative and quantitative evidence on nature-based activity providers' participation in green social prescribing and examples of good practice, exploring perceptions and experiences of present systems.

4.2 Case studies and qualitative research

Tenderers could consider focusing on a small number of case studies (e.g., four to six) to improve understanding of the barriers and enablers for particular providers, and to examine the relationships and join-up with key stakeholders in green social prescribing systems (e.g., link workers and other referrers).

Defra expects that the project will include new in-depth qualitative research with nature-based activity providers, including large and small organisations with different levels of current engagement in green social prescribing, and providing activities for adults and children with a range of mental and physical health needs.

Case studies and qualitative research should include organisations providing a range of nature-based activities (e.g., conservation, horticulture and gardening, care farming, exercise and sport, creativity and arts, and talking therapies) and operating in a range of natural environments.

Case studies should also be undertaken in a good geographical spread of locations around the country.

4.3 Survey control

⁷ <https://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk/media/pwnjf4oo/natural-environment-evidence-briefing-final.pdf>

⁸ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4973580642418688>

⁹ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6416203718590464>

Any surveys will need to be approved by Defra's Survey Control Unit (SCU). Time should be allowed to gain approval in principle as soon as possible within the project, and full approval when all documentation is available.

5. Outputs and timetable

The successful tender should deliver a report of suitable length and supporting documents to inform Defra's policies to meet the objectives above. Reports must be produced in line with Defra's publications and accessibility standards.

The following outputs are required:

- Scoping report approximately four weeks after contract award
- Interim report approximately half way through the project. The date for this is flexible - tenderers may move the date for delivery of the interim report if this makes sense in the overall context of the proposed programme of work
- Draft final report and Research Briefing (approximately 6 pages) based on the draft final report, using a template supplied by Defra
- Final report and Research Briefing
- Case studies of good practice (as defined through the evidence review as well as the new research undertaken as part of this project), to be included in the interim report as appropriate and in the final report
- Progress updates and other appropriate papers prior to progress and steering group meetings, and appropriate records of these meetings
- Presentations of the interim, draft and/or final reports to Defra and other audiences and other outputs to aid learning at appropriate events

The project is expected to last approximately 11 months. The contract is expected to start in May 2024 and finish in March 2025. With the opportunity to extend 6 months + 6 months.

The proposed timetable of work and key milestones is summarised below. Tenderers should build on this to provide a detailed project timetable, indicating all deliverables and suggested payment milestones. Proposals should include a Gantt chart showing the sequence of all key components of the project.

Contract commences	13 th May 2024
Scoping report	7 th June 2024
Interim report (this date is flexible)	31st October 2024
Draft final report and Research Briefing	28th February 2025
Final report and Research Briefing	31st March 2025

6. Publication

Defra intends to publish the final report from this project, and may wish to publish other outputs, e.g., as annexes to the final report. However, the Department reserves the right to determine if and how results should be published.

The final report will be independently peer reviewed. The successful tenderer should be prepared to respond to peer review comments and make amendments to the final report if required prior to publication.

Following publication of the final report, Defra will in general support other opportunities to publish findings and disseminate project findings more widely.

7. Project management, quality assurance, risk management and data security

Defra will require the successful tenderers to adhere to the highest standards of project management, quality assurance, risk management and mitigation, and data security.

Tenderers should provide details of their proposed project management arrangements and set out their quality assurance processes and standards.

Proposals should identify and assess the risks associated with undertaking the work and propose how these will be managed and overcome.

The successful tenderer will be required to implement appropriate arrangements for data security. Tenderers should confirm within their response that such procedures will be implemented and outline the technical measures to be put in place to meet such requirements. The successful tenderer will be required to obtain the necessary consent from participants that makes it clear how their data will be shared and the purposes for which it will be used.

The research should be carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation¹⁰.

Tenderers are required to set out any potential ethical issues presented by the project along with details of the arrangements for ethical scrutiny to ensure management of these risks.

Tenderers must have a clear approach for ensuring that the research is compliant with relevant ethical codes of conduct, including Government Social Research (GSR) ethical assurance guidance¹¹.

8. Governance

Defra will establish and chair a Steering Group for this project. The successful tenderer will report into this Group.

9. Programme of work

The successful tenderer will be responsible for all travel and subsistence costs related to the work and the supply of all labour, materials and equipment.

¹⁰ <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr>

¹¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1000708/2021-GSR_Ethics_Guidance_v3.pdf

Tenderers may propose consortium or subcontracting arrangements but should provide a single project manager responsible to Defra for fulfilment of the contract and for liaison with Defra's contract manager. The successful tenderer will provide written progress updates to Defra as required during the project and will agree to meet with Defra officials as and when required.

The successful tenderer must meet deadlines as proposed within their tender submission and subsequently agreed with Defra throughout the project and will notify Defra without delay if there is a risk that they may be unable to meet these deadlines.

Defra will inform the contractor without delay if there is any deficiency in the quality of the services provided under the contract. The contractor will take steps to ensure any problems are resolved as a matter of urgency.

Defra would welcome proposals from independent tenderers and consortia for this project.

Total Bid Cost:		£99,680
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Appendix 4: Processing Personal Data

Authorised Processing Template

Agreement:	C23172
Date:	13/05/2024
Description of authorised processing	Understanding Nature-based Activity Providers' Participation in Green Social Prescribing
Identity of Controller and Processor for each category of Personal Data	<p>The parties acknowledge that for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation the controller and processor are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controller: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)• Processor: Simon Christmas Ltd
Subject matter of the processing	<p>The subject matter will be Green Social Prescribing and any related subjects necessary to undertake this research on 'Understanding nature-based activity providers' participation in green social prescribing'</p>
Duration of the processing	<p>The processing will be for the duration of the contract</p>
Nature and purposes of the processing	<p>The nature of the processing may include collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction of data (whether or not by automated means).</p> <p>The purpose is to undertake this research on 'Understanding nature-based activity providers' participation in green social prescribing'.</p> <p>The nature and purposes of processing required for this research are quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis and reporting in order to carry out all components of the project</p>
Type of Personal Data	<p>Name, address, telephone number, email address and any other personal data outlined in the specification, proposal or research plans</p>
Categories of Data Subject	<p>Service users and staff members at Green Social Prescribing activity providers and other stakeholders as indicated in the specification, proposal or research plans</p>

Plan for return and destruction of the data once the processing is complete UNLESS requirement under law to preserve that type of data	The processor will store relevant personal data in secure files within the UK. Relevant personal data will be retained in accordance with the controller's and processor's retention policies.
Locations at which the Contractor and/or its sub-contractors process Personal Data under this Agreement	The contractor and any subcontractors will process personal data at locations within the UK
Protective Measures that the Contractor and, where applicable, its sub-contractors have implemented to protect Personal Data processed under this Agreement against a breach of security (insofar as that breach of security relates to data) or a Personal Data Breach	The contractor and any subcontractors will implement appropriate protective measures against a breach of security, as set out in the controller's and processor's data protection policies