

www.gov.uk/naturalengland

Request for Quotation

## Request for Quotation

**Assessment of wild living beaver populations on the River Exe and River Taw (including Little Dart)**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification below.

Please confirm, by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: beavers@naturalengland.org.uk

Date: 4 November 2022

Time: 16:00

Ensure you state the reference number and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timeline**

Laura Dalton ([laura.dalton@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:laura.dalton@naturalengland.org.uk)) will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote pack or the process. Please submit any questions by email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 24 October 2022 at 09:00 BST / GMT |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 2 November 2022 at 16:00 BST / GMT |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 4 November 2022 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 11 November 2022 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 1 December 2022 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 31 May 2023 / 6 months |

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### Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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| “Authority” | Means the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of Natural England |
| “RFQ” | Means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers |
| “Contract” | Means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |

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### Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your response to the RFQ and related documents ensuring it is complete prior to submitting your completed quotation.

Your quotation must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your quotation fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

The supplier by submitting a quotation is deemed to accept the terms and conditions in the RFQ. Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RTQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this procurement.

**Acceptance of Quotations**

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

#### Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

#### Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes mandatory requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated. All mandatory requirements are set out in Bravo.

#### Clarifications

The Authority reserves the right to discuss, confidentially, any aspect of your quotation with you prior to any award of Contract to clarify matters.

#### Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you in writing and may extend the deadline for receipt in order to give you a reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account.

#### Conditions of Contract

The terms and conditions attached [Condensed Terms and Conditions](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/914956/standard-condensed-terms.odt) will be included in any contract awarded as a result of this RFQ process. The Authority will not accept any material changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

#### Specification

The Authority is Natural England. The Authority’s priorities are to secure a healthy natural environment; a sustainable, low-carbon economy; a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy and secure food supply. Further information about the Authority can be found at: [Natural England](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/).

Background

Interest in beaver reintroduction has been increasing in England due to the species’ ability to transform landscapes and return natural processes to river systems. A feasibility study (Gurnell *et al.* 2009) confirmed there is sufficient suitable habitat in England to support Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) at many locations; with appropriate climatic conditions and sources of wild and captive beavers to support the initial population. In England there is approximately 13,000 km2 of suitable beaver habitat that has the potential to support viable populations of beavers in many catchments (Howe, 2020).

Beavers have been reintroduced in small numbers in England since the early 2000s mainly into outdoor fenced enclosures. In August 2020, the UK government announced the River Otter beaver population could remain and naturally expand its range after a successful five-year trial (Howe and Crutchley 2020). In 2021 Defra carried out a national public consultation on the approach to further beaver reintroductions and their management in England. On the 1st October 2022 beavers living in the wild in England were given legal protection.

Outside of the River Otter and the enclosures, at least 50 territories of wild-living beavers are believed to exist in England, comprising a total of approximately 125 – 250 beavers (Heydon *et al.* 2021). These populations originate from escapes from enclosures and private collections and/or un-official releases. There are records of small populations of beavers living on the following six catchments:

* River Stour catchments, East Kent
* River Tamar, Cornwall and Devon
* Rivers Avon (including the Frome and By Brook) and Brue, Somerset, and Wiltshire
* River Taw (including the Little Dart), Devon
* River Exe, Devon
* River Wye, Herefordshire, and Welsh border

Natural England is interested in understanding more about these beaver populations.

The contract requirements

This RFQ concerns an assessment of the beaver populations living on the River Exe and River Taw (including Little Dart) in Devon.

Tasks include:

1. Liaison with the Devon Beaver Management Group over the survey plan.

1. Identify the location of suitable beaver habitat using beaver records to define the areas to survey over winter 2022/2023. Natural England has provided below the locations of beaver and field sign records on the Rivers Exe, Taw and Little Dart as a guide to where beavers are present.

1. Contact landowners/occupiers to arrange access for undertaking the survey on a specific date/time*. Natural England will provide information to the supplier (including a map) of identified landowners/occupiers who have given access permission for the survey*.

1. Ensure you have any waterway licences or permits needed for the survey (if applicable).

1. Undertake a field survey over winter (December 2022 to March 2023), once vegetation has died back, to enable beaver signs to be recorded and mapped. The surveys will record all beaver signs including structures (lodges, dams, and burrows) along the planned survey route on foot and kayak following the standardised methodology (see *Campbell-Palmer et al. 2021, Campbell-Palmer et al. 2020, Campbell-Palmer et al. 2018 & Campbell et al. 2012)*. In addition, to note any impacts caused by the beavers and possible areas of conflict. Fortnightly, progress updates will be sent to the Natural England project lead (Laura Dalton).

The survey should include the following rivers and associated tributaries:

* **River Exe from Exbridge to confluence of Burn River near Butterleigh** (including River Batherm & River Dart and the River Culm from Cullompton to Uffculme)
* **Little Dart River to the headwaters** (Including Huntacott Water, Adworthy Brook & Sturcombe River)
* **River Taw from Bondleigh to Umberleigh** (Including River Mole to Satterleigh & Bartridge Brook)

1. Analyse and interpret the raw survey data and undertake modelling to indicate:

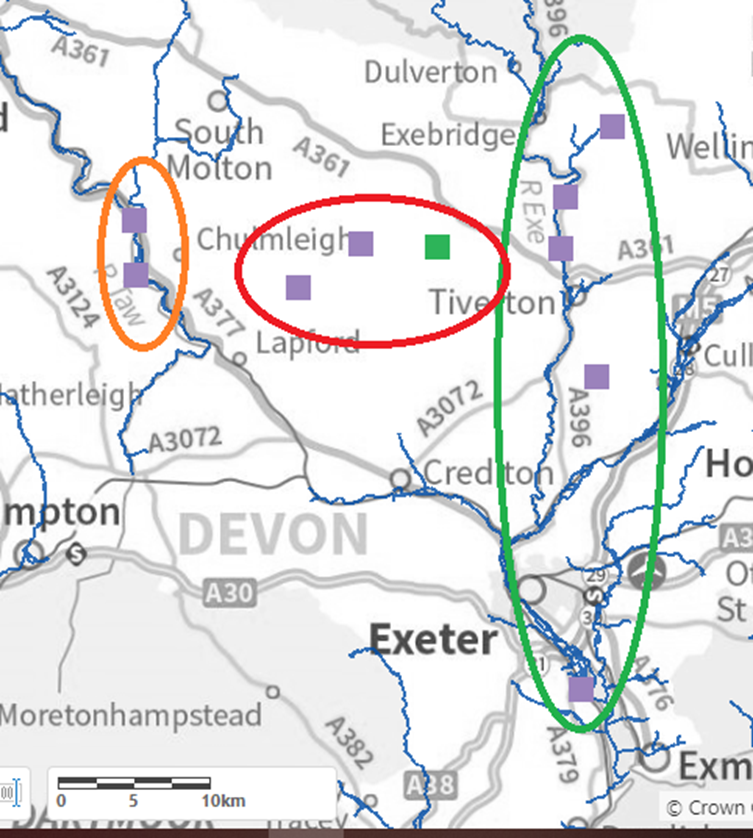
* The distribution of beavers throughout the area surveyed
* The numbers of beaver territories and their locations and population estimate

1. Submit the raw survey data and a report to Natural England of the assessment of beaver populations living on the River Exe and River Taw (including Little Dart).

Beaver Records

Records of beavers in the Little Dart were first reported in February 2021, when beaver signs were reported on social media (Heydon *et al*. 2021). The beaver was initially assumed to be an escape from the enclosure 6 km away at Witheridge, however all the beavers in the enclosure were accounted for. Camera trapping footage confirmed the beaver to be a young kit. There are other records of activity along the Little Dart including feeding signs. Records of beavers on the River Taw include a confirmed record of beavers in 2019 (See figure 1), on the confluence between the Taw and Little Dart with further records 4 km upstream on the River Taw.

Beavers were first reported on the River Exe in April 2019 when an individual from the River Otter Beaver Trial was discovered on the River Culm, a tributary of the River Exe, and was later returned to the River Otter. In June 2021, another individual was found in poor health at Exminster Marshes, it was rehabilitated and returned to the River Otter. In September 2021, two reports of beavers were verified at Cove and Heathcote Mill (See figure 1) on the main channel of the River Exe. In April 2022 there has been verified records of beavers at Washfield (on a leat) and on the River Batherm (a tributary of the Exe) close to Shillingford. There is an initial estimate of two or three families as camera trapping has confirmed the presence of two beavers at both Shillingford and Washfield during the same period. In May 2022 there was a verified report of beavers on the River Culme, south of Willand.



**Figure 1:** A map of Natural England records of beavers on the River Taw, Little Dart and Exe, Devon. (Purple □ Records visual sightings of beaver, Green □ Records of beaver feeding signs)

Campbell-Palmer, R., Puttock, A., Needham, R.N., Wilson, K., Graham, H. & Brazier, R.E. (2021). Survey of the Tayside Area Beaver Population 2020-2021. NatureScot Research Report 1274

Campbell-Palmer, R, Puttock, A, Wilson, K.A., Leow-Dyke, A., Graham, H.A., Gaywood, M.J. & Brazier, R.E. (2020). Using field sign surveys to estimate spatial distribution and territory dynamics following reintroduction of the Eurasian beaver to British river catchments. *River Res Applic*. 37: 343– 357.

Campbell-Palmer, R., Puttock, A., Graham, H., Wilson, K., Schwab, G., Gaywood, M.J. & Brazier, R.E. (2018). Survey of the Tayside area beaver population 2017-2018. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 1013.

Campbell, R.D., Harrington, A., Ross, A. and Harrington, L. (2012). Distribution, population assessment and activities of beavers in Tayside. Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. - SNH use only

Gurnell, J., Gurnell, A.M., Demeritt, D., Lurz, P.W.W., Shirley, M.D.F, Rushton, S.P., Faulkes, C.G., Norbert, S. and Hare, E.J. (2009). The feasibility and acceptability of reintroducing the European Beavers to England. Natural England Report.

Heydon M.J., Pouget, D., Gray, S., Wagstaff, G., Ashton, M. & Andison, E. (2021). Beaver reintroductions in England: 2000 – 2021. JP036. Natural England, York.

Howe, C.V. (Ed) (2020). A review of the evidence on the interactions of beavers with the natural and human environment in relation to England. Natural England Evidence Review NEER017. Peterborough: Natural England.

Howe, C. V. and Crutchley, S. E. (2020) The River Otter Beaver Trial: Natural England’s assessment of the trial and advice on the future of the beaver population. Natural England Evidence Review NEER018. Peterborough: Natural England.

**Contract**

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of six months to end no later than 31/05/2023. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, inclusive of VAT.

**Quotation Submission**

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Price – 50%

Quality – 50%

All documents including the following:

* E01 – GDPR (Data Protection)
* E02 – Sustainability
* E03 – Approach and Methodology
* E04 – Ability to Deliver
* E05 – Project Team
* E06 – Recent experience of carrying out similar contracts
* E07 – Health and Safety

Must be in the format of a Microsoft Word document and uploaded into a single folder.

The folder must be compressed into a zip file and emailed to beavers@naturalengland.org.uk.

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| **Quality Criteria** | **Weighting** | **To include:** |
| **E01 –**  **GDPR (Data Protection)** | Pass or Fail question.  Failure to pass Data Protection criteria will disqualify the bidder. The response has no bearing on the technical weighting. | Please provide details of the technical facilities and measures (including systems and processes) you have in place, or will have in place by contract award, to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and to ensure the protection of the rights of data subjects. Your response should include, but should not be limited to facilities and measures to:   * ensure ongoing confidentiality, integrity, availability and resilience of processing systems and services * comply with the rights of data subjects in respect of receiving privacy information, and access, rectification, deletion and portability of personal data * ensure legal safeguards are in place to legitimise transfers of personal data outside the EU (if such transfers take place). * maintain records of personal data processing activities; and * regularly test, access and evaluate the effectiveness of the above measures   Please provide your Data Protection policy with the file name  “E01 \_Your Company Name” |
| **E02 – Sustainability** | Pass or Fail question.  Failure to pass Sustainability criteria will disqualify the bidder. The response has no bearing on the technical weighting. | You must provide satisfactory assurance that the project will be delivered in a sustainable manner, and/or promoting sustainability, where relevant. To enable this assessment to be made, you must as a minimum:   * Provide a copy of your organisation’s Sustainability policy   Please provide your Sustainability policy with the file name “E02\_ Your Company Name” |
| **E03 – Approach and Methodology** | 35 | Please submit an outline method of how you propose to deliver the project.    Please provide details of the methodology and approaches proposed to deliver the requirements of this project. Include information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of their suitability to deliver the project objectives (see Specification above).  Evaluation Criteria:   * Demonstration of a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements. * Provision of a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver the requirements including:  1. Outline proposed approach to provide baseline data of beaver distribution and population numbers on the Rivers Exe, Taw and Little Dart. 2. Summary methodology to deliver each of the project objectives.     Please provide a document with the filename “E03\_Your Company Name”.  The attachment must include the information requested above (maximum response: 4 sides of A4, font size 10). |
| **E04 – Ability to Deliver** | 35 | Please outline how you will ensure that you will meet the required timescales for delivery of this piece of work. In your answer, please include a project outline of key milestones and the information you require to achieve these.  Evaluation Criteria:   * Provision of an organogram showing a suitable project management structure and lines of communication and reporting and clear outlines of roles and responsibilities including who will be responsible for arranging landowner access. * Inclusion of a project plan and Gantt chart to show delivery timelines and milestones. * Confirmation of availability of staff assigned to the project. * Description of management of staff resources and suitable contingency measures should problems arise (e.g., through illness or staff unavailability). * Provide an equipment list of what will be used for the surveys * Quality assurance measures (including internal monitoring and review processes).     Please upload a document with the filename “E04\_Your Company Name”.  The attachment must include the information requested above (maximum response: 4 sides of A4, font size 10). |
| **E05 – Project Team** | 10 | Please submit pen portraits/thumbnails of the Project Team separately.    Please provide descriptions of roles and responsibilities for the Project Team and ensure it is clear who is responsible for project management, surveying, landowner permissions, analysis of data and report writing.  Please provide a document with the filename “E05\_Your Company Name”.  The attachment must include the information requested above (maximum response: 4 sides of A4, font size 10). |
| **E06 – Recent experience of carrying out similar contracts** | 10 | Please detail previous relevant work you have undertaken.    Please provide details of any relevant canoeing/kayaking training, water safety courses and experience.  Please provide a document with the filename “E06\_Your Company Name”. The attachment must include the information requested above (maximum response: 4 sides of A4, font size 10). |
| **E07 – Health and Safety** | 10 | You must provide satisfactory assurances of commitment to health and safety while undertaking the work. To enable this assessment to be made, you must provide:   * a copy of your Health & Safety policy/statement or, if you have fewer than five\* employees, provide information about how health and safety is assured in your organisation. * a risk assessment for a similar project of this type * appropriate liability insurance certificates * assurance of competence for all employees     Please provide your Health & Safety policy with the file name “E07\_ Your Company Name” |

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| **Score** | **Justification** |
| For a score of hundred (100): | Excellent - Response is completely relevant and excellent overall.  The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full. |
| For a score of seventy (70): | Good - Response is relevant and good.  The response demonstrates a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled. |
| For a score of fifty (50): | Acceptable - Response is relevant and acceptable.  The response provides sufficient evidence to fulfil basic requirements. |
| For a score of twenty (20): | Poor - Response is partially relevant and/or poor.  The response addresses some elements of the requirements but contains insufficient / limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled. |
| For a score of zero (0): | Unacceptable - Nil or inadequate response.  Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement. |

**Contract Management**

This contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by Laura Dalton (email: [laura.dalton@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:laura.dalton@naturalengland.org.uk))

**Outputs**

The contractor will provide an analysis and interpretation of the survey data and present the results in the format of the following outputs:

* 1. A copy of the raw survey data (10 figure OS National Grid reference) in the format of a Microsoft Excel document to be provided to Natural England by 31/03/2023.
  2. A draft report to be provided to Natural England by 30/04/2023 for review and comments.

* 1. A final report to be provided to Natural England by 31/05/2023 in which the locations of any beaver structures such as lodges, dams and burrows will be kept confidential within the main section. All maps will be reported using a 1km2 resolution.

The report will contain:

* A main section containing the following:
* Summary of the scope and aims of the surveys, including a figure of the area surveyed.
* Description of the methodology used for the surveys.
* An assessment and map of the distribution of beavers.
* An assessment and map of the number of beaver territories present in the areas surveyed.
* Population estimates of the number of beavers within the areas surveyed.

* A confidential annex containing the following:
* An assessment and maps of the beaver signs throughout the area surveyed.
* A detailed map of the distribution of beavers
* A detailed map of the number of territories
* Future recommendations including areas to survey
* Details of any beaver impacts recorded during the survey.

**Project milestones**

Provisional dates for delivery of the contract outputs are set out below. Exact dates are to be agreed at a start-up meeting based on Contractor and Natural England staff availability. Please note, due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19, it is anticipated that meetings may be held remotely. Please state your preference of software for virtual meetings on your tender.

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| **Milestones** | **Provisional dates** |
| Start-up meeting | Late November 2022 |
| Surveys undertaken | December 2022 to March 2023 |
| Raw survey data submitted to Natural England | 31 March 2023 |
| Draft report submitted to Natural England | 30 April 2023 |
| Final report (addressing comments on the draft report) submitted to Natural England | 31 May 2023 |

**Contract management meetings**

Fortnightly updates will be sent to the Natural England project lead (Laura Dalton) two weeks after the contract start date.

**Payment**

We will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The supplier can invoice after completion of the following project milestones:

* Delivery of the raw data to Natural England – 50% of the contract value
* Delivery of the draft report to Natural England – 25% of the contract value
* Delivery of the final report to Natural England – 25% of the contract value

### Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

By submitting a quotation you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

### Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

**Protection of Personal Data**

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the contractor must agree to the following:

* You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority
* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be **held and destroyed within two years** of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within **seven years** of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.