**Nature + Love Project Brief**

**Horniman Museum and Gardens**

**Required Services: Access Consultant**

**Estimated value of Tender:** £20,000

**Estimated Duration of Contract:**

Development stage Complete by end February 2023

4 month break clause (between NLHF Stage 1 and Stage 2)

Delivery phase Complete February 2026

**Name of Contact:** Kirsten Walker

**Timetable for responses to brief:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tender Issue | 14 March 2022 |  |  |
| Clarifications Period Closes | 04 April 2022 |  |  |
| Tender Submission Deadline | 11 April 2022 |  |  |
| Evaluation of Responses | 12 April 2022 – 14 April 2022 |  |  |
| Invitation to Interview | 14 April 2022 |  |  |
| Interviews | 20-22 April 2022 |  |  |
| Appointment | 28 April 2022 |  |  |
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1. **Introduction**

**1.1 Summary**

The Horniman Museum and Gardens is planning a major redevelopment of parts of its Gardens and its Natural History Galleries, to be completed by early 2026. The re-invigorated and re-interpreted outdoor and indoor spaces and associated collections, will enable us to celebrate our love and need for the natural world and encourage an inclusive and positive movement for environmental change amongst our audiences. The redevelopment will span two gallery and three gardens spaces. The total project budget is circa £8.9 million.

**1.2 Horniman Museum**

In 1901 Frederick Horniman gave the Horniman Museum and Gardens as a free gift to the people for their education, recreation and enjoyment, and this vision still remains central to the Horniman today. A blend of high quality collections spanning the natural, multi-cultural and musical worlds; 16 acres of well managed urban open space; community based educational and leisure programmes and a wide range of performance, events and activities provide an unrivalled opportunity to encounter and understand the richness and variety of the world in which we live.

The Horniman’ audience is local, national and international and it actively seeks to attract users of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. It is a much loved community resource for London and the South East. It has an exceptional record of educational achievement and works with a range of partners to develop its learning programme and encourage participation from as wide a range of people as possible.

**1.3 About the Nature + Love project:**

In 2019 the Horniman declared a Climate Emergency and in 2020 published a climate and ecology manifesto outlining the steps we will take to mitigate against the climate and ecological emergency, and to help shape a positive future for generations to come including the intention to be greenhouse gas neutral by 2040. The Horniman’s first pledge is to deliver:

* ‘an ambitious Nature + Love project to redisplay the natural history and living collections, to highlight climate and ecological issues to a wider audience’.

In the wake of the pandemic the Horniman has revisited its long terms plans and outlined a Reset Agenda, with a number of priorities which are:

1. Engage wider audiences through programming and communications
2. Diversify staff and volunteers
3. Consult people and work in partnership
4. Address the history of the Horniman business and institutional collecting
5. Enhance our digital provision
6. Make the Horniman greenhouse gas neutral and more biodiverse
7. Maximise income generation to support this agenda

These objectives enshrine our determination to use the Horniman’s position as London’s only museum of global nature and culture to raise awareness of urgent issues of climate change and global social justice, whilst becoming a more inclusive organisation and building our post-Covid organisational resilience.

Nature + Love has been set as the priority project in the context of this new Reset Agenda. The project improves access and use of key outdoor spaces, and will modernise the 60 year old interpretation in the 1901 Natural History Gallery to form a key part of our strategy to engage people in mitigating the climate and ecological crisis. It focuses on mobilising our love and concern for future generations in order to spur action on current climate and ecological challenges.

The project is a generational transformation project and will play an essential role in strengthening the social, economic and green recovery of both the Horniman and its local community as it emerges from the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We will redevelop several areas of the Horniman’s estate and heritage assets, making new connections between outdoor green spaces and interior gallery displays using accessible interpretation and digital technology.

We will create:

* a 'Nature Explorers Adventure Zone' opening access to our historic Nature Trail and introducing a nature-themed play area and children’s café, encouraging learning and wellbeing through exploration and play
* an outdoor 'Sustainable Gardening Zone' with new plant nursery and sustainable planting displays encouraging improved health and wellbeing, and a programme to encourage adult skills development
* a redisplayed Natural History Gallery and Nature Explorers Action Zone, exploring human understanding of and impact upon the planet, and supporting people to make changes on a local and personal level
* a range of nature-focused partnerships and activities to diversify our audiences.

Embedded throughout the project will be an impactful activity programme including a new Forest Schools learning offer and range of digital content, aimed at encouraging more people to connect to nature and wildlife and leading to change in individual ideas and actions.

As part of this work we are seeking Access Consultant Services to help us deliver

the project.

**1.4 Current Issues for:**

**a) The Gardens**

At this time of global climate and ecological crisis and in the wake of a global pandemic, the Nature + Love project has potential to become a focus of community, local and sectoral environmental initiatives. Lewisham Council has declared a climate emergency and has outlined tackling this and creating a greener borough as two of its strategic objectives in the Lewisham Local Plan 2021. The Lewisham Biodiversity Partnership, of which we are a member, recently published its updated action plan outlining strategies for the conservation of nature and the contribution of Lewisham’s natural environment to quality of life and sustainable development objectives within the Borough, making it a better place to live, study and work. Schools projects and activist groups have formed across south London. Our project and venue are where our community and these complementary partners and missions can come together to encourage sustainability and biodiversity and raise visitors’ awareness of local wildlife, the natural world and what action they can take at an individual level.

Whole areas of our listed gardens are under-used due to being inaccessible or undiscovered, yet their value to our community during lockdown has been evident in the visitor numbers and feedback we have received. The opportunity to provide new forms of access to nature and green space will support the wellbeing of our local community and specific targeted groups.

The first area that needs development is our Nature Trail and nearby old model boating lake – both suffering from under use and lack of investment. Our half a mile long Nature Trail is London’s oldest following the route of the original Crystal Palace and South London Junction Railway. The railway was closed in 1954 and the area was left unmanaged until 1972, resulting in it becoming a wild woodland area. Today, the trail features a variety of plants, birds, insects and other animals, including the endangered stag beetle. However it is not directly accessible from the Gardens and consequently very few of our visitors know that it is there. Signage and interpretation is virtually non-existent, and it is inaccessible to those with mobility issues. For these reasons it has recently lost its Green Flag award. Similarly, the old boating lake, one of the historic features of the Gardens, is drained to its concrete base and looks neglected and is consequently under-utilised.

The second area on the other side of the estate is our plant nursery, which is reaching the end of its life, and the adjacent South Downs Garden. Maintenance is a challenge and the current layouts do not make the most of these spaces. The nursery, whilst a critical resource that allows the Gardens team to produce plant material for pop-up gardens and temporary displays each year, urgently needs replacing with modern facilities designed for public access. Planting in the South Downs does not take account of ground conditions in the area and because of the steep incline, paths are very difficult to maintain, meaning this space is becoming less accessible to our visitors and is closed off in a number of places.

**b) The Natural History spaces:**

Our Natural History Gallery first opened in 1901 and has changed very little over the past century. Indeed, the bulk of the interpretation has been in-situ since the 1960s. The Gallery features several different natural science based topics and themes, mainly evolution and adaptation. The approach to interpretation is out of date and much of the labelling is now scientifically inaccurate. The poor presentation of scientific content, its relevance and comprehension is a significant barrier for families, schools and marginalised groups. It makes few connections between people and nature and does not adequately explain the impact and implications of climate change or biodiversity loss and what this means for the future of life on the planet and what we might do to help.

This gallery still retains many of the original showcases built in 1901 and these contribute to an historic atmosphere much loved by our visitors, however the cases are not airtight, let in dust and insect pests, have minimal lighting and need refurbishment to improve their condition. Most of the cases retain their original Edwardian locks and are either very difficult or very easy to open.

The general infrastructure of the gallery needs urgent attention, the fabric of the roof is failing, there are damp walls, worn out floors, pest infestation issues and the lighting and gallery environment are difficult to control with temperature and humidity fluctuating widely between the summer and winter months. The redevelopment of its companion gallery, the World Gallery in 2018, has only served to highlight its outdated and tired infrastructure and content. All of these issues affect the visitor experience and need to be addressed as part of the Nature + Love project.

**c) Our Natural History collections**

In 2012-13 we conducted an in-depth review of our Natural History collection, supported by the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund. This enabled us to re-evaluate the strengths and potential of the collection for increased public engagement, display, and in learning and research terms. The Natural History collection contains around 250,000 specimens. Currently only a small proportion are on public display, the vast majority for many decades without rotation. Recent research shows that our visitors would like to see a greater diversity of specimens on display that showcase the quality and significance of our collection. A major re-design and re-display of the gallery introducing new themes and topics will allow us to showcase more of the spectacular and significant specimens currently housed in our Study Collections Centre, many of which have not been displayed for many decades.

In addition to this, new acquisitions and loans (large taxidermy specimens or dinosaur models) will be procured as spectacular gateway specimens to provide a more accessible route into a particular topic or theme.

**2. Our vision for the Nature + Love project:**

**2.1 Audiences**

Nature + Love offers the Horniman the ability to create a seismic shift in our audience development work by appealing to a wider range of visitors, including current non-visitors. Our audience research has identified an appreciation of nature as the common thread amongst all existing and non-visitors. Our priority objective therefore is to use the project as a mechanism for increasing the diversity of our general audiences to more closely match that of the London population in terms of ethnic and socio economic backgrounds, and disability. Whilst undertaking extensive targeted engagement with local community, marginalised and schools groups, we will also take an intersectional approach to how we achieve these demographic changes in our audience profile by embedding a new audience segmentation system into the project.

We will prioritise two general audience segments in particular that have high representation of these demographic targets, alongside underrepresentation in our current audience profile. These are:

• Active Achievers - families that live for exciting, challenging, new experiences which take them out into the world, but are less confident in conventional cultural spaces.

• Self Improvers - adults focused on living their best lives, seeking enjoyment and fulfilment. Connecting with the natural world helps meet their need for both physical and mental wellbeing.

England’s Index of Multiple Deprivation places Lewisham in the top 20% most deprived areas in England. 46% of residents are from ethnic minorities, this rises to c. 76% among school children. 51% of Lewisham residents live in rented property, often without a private green space. Research from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), Natural England and the Mental Health Foundation have shown the inequalities that exist and how the desire for engagement with nature is not matched with access to high-quality nature spaces for everyone in the UK. The MHF found younger adults, and people living with a disability or health condition, often face particular barriers when natural spaces are not equipped with inclusion in mind or there is a lack of accessible routes. Also, even when we compare people of similar age, social grade and living situation (similar area, with or without children), those of Black ethnicity are 2.4 times less likely than those of White ethnicity to have a private garden (Office for National Statistics, ‘One in eight British households has no garden’, May 2020).

High quality redevelopment of urban parks, designed with accessibility in mind, can undoubtedly enable more people to enjoy and connect with nature. We will work hard during every stage of the project to ensure that ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, previous cultural engagement and disability are not barriers to engagement. Each element of our activity programme will be developed in consultation or co-production with a mix of audience demographics reached through diverse partners, representative organisations, surveys and consultation panels, to ensure that a broad range of visitor needs are met, that the experience will be enjoyable and relevant, and subsequent marketing promotion is targeted and appealing. Barriers identified during this ongoing consultation will be addressed as they arise.

The main groups and partners that will participate in the project will be:

1. Non-Audience Active Achievers and Self Improvers – We will recruit a panel of approx. 12 non-Horniman visitors from the local area (Lewisham, Lambeth and Southwark)
2. School children and their teachers from five Lewisham schools with a high percentage of free school meals and/or from ethnic minority backgrounds
3. Representatives of Special Educational Needs and Disability groups as members of our Access Advisory panel, looking at the development of accessible wayfinding, interpretation, audio description tours, BSL-led family activities and early relaxed openings
4. Families with limited access to outdoor space or wildlife.
5. Young people interested in developing digital and other skills, which for some will move them nearer to employment
6. Marginalised adults including those most vulnerable to lower levels of wellbeing, and experiencing social isolation via eight community partners
7. Existing audiences and local stakeholders
8. Local environmental action stakeholders and nature-themed organisations
9. Volunteers.

**2.2 Gardens improvements we want to achieve:**

We will transform two areas of the Gardens into new outdoor interactive zones. The Nature Explorers Adventure Zone will be an engaging and enjoyable outdoor family destination. Unified by a local wildlife theme, and complementing the existing Great North Wood project spearheaded by the London Wildlife Trust, the new zone will open up access to the Nature Trail and establish a new outdoor play area and children’s café nearby, overall combining to attract new and different audiences and encourage improved health and wellbeing through nature exploration and play. Its components are:

* A new Kindercafé by the old model boating pond, with an adjacent welcome space for programmed activities in the play area and Nature Trail, that includes interpretation on the history of the trail, the earlier railway line and the historic woods around the site
* An outdoor local nature-themed children’s play area with climbable logs, rope walks and a focus on animals local to the area such as stag beetles, hedgehogs and bats.
* An accessible level link to the Nature Trail from the Horniman Gardens
* Improvement of the Nature Trail potentially including the relocation of our Wildlife garden there; bug hotels; more interpretation, and opening up its southern end as a through-route linking to the Green Chain Walk via Camberwell Old Cemetery.

The second outdoor zone will be a Sustainable Gardening Zone, redeveloping and linking a new, publicly accessible plant nursery to a transformed South Downs Garden that includes refurbished pathways for improved accessibility and a new, rolling programme of immersive, sustainable planting displays, for example transforming to a Winter Garden during the colder months. This new zone will also include an interactive outdoor engagement space where we look at themes that will help visitors make lifestyle changes within their home and garden. These include: Composting and recycling; Sustainable water use; Encouraging wildlife habitats and choosing the right plants for your garden.

**2.3 Practical considerations for the Nature Explorers Adventure Zone**:

* Widen and diversify our audiences through an outdoor, accessible (non-‘museum’) offer
* The existing planting along the Nature Trail is important and should be retained and enhanced, we have recent quarterly ecological management surveys which should be used to inform this project
* The café and play spaces could focus on animals local to the area such as stag beetles, hedgehogs and bats
* It would also be good to highlight the history of the Trail – the railway line and the historic woods around the site, these could also be used as themes in the play area
* Important that the Kindercafe provides toilets and storage facilities to support group activities along the Nature Trail.
* Drainage around the old boating pond is very poor and a ground drainage survey is available to inform the project
* There are residential buildings close to the Nature Trail and consideration of this should inform the development
* Create an additional visitor destination / enhance our day out offer
* Encourage visitation to a currently under visited area / encourage better footfall distribution across the estate
* Encourage wildlife/biodiversity and raise visitors’ awareness of local wildlife
* Provide more catering covers and generate income.

**2.4 Practical considerations for the Sustainable Gardening Zone**:

* Provide propagation facilities that are modern and fit for purpose - automatic venting, heating using sustainable biomass boiler and rain harvesting technology.
* Make better use of existing space, by removing poly tunnels and glasshouses and replacing with one single glasshouse freeing up more room for an uncovered hard standing area for plants.
* Incorporate an outdoor exhibition area focusing on sustainable gardening techniques.
* Viewing area that gives people the opportunity to see inside a modern nursery setup
* Educate visitors how they can be more sustainable in their own garden, and showcasing the organisation’s own environmental awareness
* Improve accessibility to the South Downs
* Improve the horticultural offer, create winter plant interest using coloured stems, winter flowers, structural evergreen shrubs and trees and winter bulb display.

**2.5 Natural History Gallery improvements we want to achieve:**

Our new Natural History Gallery will retain its historical infrastructure and atmosphere, as well as many of our most popular specimens like the walrus. Using our existing collections, new acquisitions, loans and collaborative scientific/artistic interventions, our displays and interpretation will be brought up to date – including human impact on the environment for the first time, making it more relevant and accessible to a wider range of people. The gallery will explore and celebrate our love and need for the natural world and also show how people have related to, understood, exploited and changed the natural world around the globe through time. It will examine our impact on the planet, the lessons we might learn, and how new scientific approaches, advances, fresh thinking and understanding can guide us towards a more sustainable, healthy and balanced future.

A re-focussed and expanded Nature Base will be transformed into a Nature Explorers Action Zone, providing the main interactive area for families with young children, focussing on the theme of ‘Nature and You’.

We envisage the following improvements to the infrastructure of the historic North Hall:

* Replacing the lead roof where it is failing and insulating the upper part of the roof to improve the efficiency of environmental control in the gallery
* Refurbish penthouses in the roof to improve ventilation in the space
* The provision of a new mansafe on the roof
* Attending to damp walls and poor decoration
* Improving and replacing mechanical and electrical services across the gallery
* Ensuring that environmental controls and gallery lighting are more effective and energy efficient
* We also envisage retaining and refurbishing the historic showcases to improve their air tightness and accessibility.

**2.6 Practical considerations for the Nature + Love redevelopment**:

**Gallery Look and feel:**

As mentioned above we wish to retain the historic nature and atmosphere of the existing Natural History Gallery if at all possible. Many of the existing cases were constructed as part of the original Charles Harrison Townsend 1901 building development and could be considered to be part of the Grade 2\* listing. We know that our visitors love the historic look and feel of the existing space and the opportunity it provides for all our visitors to get up as close as possible to the specimens without actually touching them.

It is however, essential that the gallery spaces, displays and interpretation are bought up-to date and we would expect the end result to be friendly, accessible and unintimidating, with relaxed seating, appropriate interactives, digital interventions and an action zone where visitors can handle objects and find out more about UK biodiversity. We wish to create an environment that inspires our visitors to explore and celebrate our love and need for the nature world, instilling a sense of curiosity and wonder and challenging visitors to take positive action to help preserve the world we all share.

**Showcases:**

We are keen to explore the potential to retain many of the existing showcases by refurbishing them to improve their air-tightness, incorporate local environmental control into the bases of these cases, improve security and safety aspects of the cases and install better and more efficient display lighting. A study will be carried out at the beginning of the development stage of the project to test the feasibility and costs of this approach.

We anticipate that we will need some new showcases to support the exhibition design and these should be specified to meet GIS standards to support any potential loans from other museums.

**Lighting:**

The main lighting design scheme for the space needs to be creative, sustainable, flexible and ultimately, it needs to show the nature and beauty of the collection as well as enabling our visitors to easily read all the interpretation and navigate the gallery safely.

Elements of the lighting design will sit within the Architectural and Exhibition design teams scope of works and we expect the two teams to collaborate closely to deliver the overall lighting scheme.

**Interpretation:**

We will provide a range of interpretation routes through the site for visitors which will include accessible materials to support parents/carers/teachers in the interpretation of the spaces for their children/pupils. The interpretation must be accessible to existing and new audiences as it is essential that this project achieves its objective of widening audiences.

The new interpretation will need to link seamlessly across all aspects of the Nature + Love project, from the Natural History Gallery and Nature Explorers Action Zone, out to the Nature Explorers Adventure Zone and Sustainable Gardening Zone in the Gardens. During the project development phase the Horniman team will create a detailed site-wide interpretation plan which will incorporate accessibility considerations throughout.

**Interactivity, physical and digital:**

Our Nature Explorers Action Zone (currently the Nature Base) will provide the main interactive area in the Museum for families with young children. It will focus on the themes of “Nature and You”, UK biodiversity and its role and importance, instilling a sense of curiosity and wonder and supporting and challenging people to take positive actions that are good for nature on a local and global level. This area needs to be fun, engaging and participatory, with a focus on robust low-tech interactives.

We will build on the findings of our Environment Champions Club to support the development of this project along with a pilot co-production project to be delivered during the development phase of the project.

We want digital interpretation to be an integral part of the gallery but we do not want it to dominate the display and would seek solutions which do not require lots of hardware in the space. Any digital interventions would need to be accessible to family groups together, with sound not being intrusive to other visitors. We would also need the digital experience to have longevity as the life of the gallery may be at least 20 years. We will work with consultants during project development to work up a feasibility study for our digital interventions.

All of these new and redisplayed spaces will be linked through an accessible, themed and cohesive approach to interpretation, alongside new wayfinding signage and interactive trails that encourage exploration and connections between the indoor and outdoor.

**3. Other Information:**

**3.1 Environmental issues / Sustainability**

In 2019 the Horniman declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and has recently published its Climate and Ecology Manifesto with the aim of becoming greenhouse gas neutral by 2040. It is essential therefore that we take a low impact approach to the design and specification of all elements of this project, wherever possible reducing its environmental impact and ensuring that all materials specified are either recycled and reused or obtained from environmentally sound and sustainable sources. We will commission a sustainability constant to help us develop and implement a sustainability strategy for the project. They will address issues including low impact design and carbon emissions reduction; design durability and resilience; adaption to climate change; and ecological value and biodiversity protection.

**3.2 Accessibility**

The Horniman is firmly committed to ensuring that all its projects are designed with full consideration given to the physical and intellectual needs of all its visitors, including children, people who are disabled, learning disabled, Deaf or hard of hearing. Commitment to the principles of the Social Model of disability and Universal Design is an essential requirement in the selection of the Access Consultant and the Project Design Teams and will not be compromised. We aim for the gallery to be award winning in its approach to accessibility.

We have a long standing external Access Advisory Group who meet at least four times a year and who will work closely with us on the Nature + Love project. We expect all design teams to work closely with this group throughout design development. We expect the Access Consultant to work very closely with our Access Advisory Group, developing a good relationship with them.

**3.3 Health and safety**

The design and specifications of the galleries must comply with the relevant statutory regulations regarding health and safety, fire safety and emergency escape requirements and to this end, before final working drawings are produced, the Design Team must supply plans and details of materials to be used for approval by the Client, local authority Fire Officers and any other relevant statutory body. All requirements of the CDM Regulations 1994 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 must be complied with.

**3.4 Longevity and maintenance**

The intention of the Horniman is to create an environment which is robust, hard wearing and as low maintenance as possible to cope with the demands of extreme usage by a large number of visitors of all ages. We would expect the lifetime of the Gardens structures and galleries to be at least 20 years with an update after 10 years.

It is anticipated that all buildings, lighting and any environmental control systems as installed will be capable of being maintained by our in-house team and term Mechanical and Electrical contractor and that a maintenance budget projection will be provided for routine AV maintenance and cyclical replacement using an external firm. Hard and soft landscaping will be maintained by our Gardens and Estates teams.

**4. Next Steps:**

**4.1 The Development Process**

The development and delivery of the Nature + Love project is dependent on securing a significant grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We received a Stage 1 pass in December 2021 and have just started the development phase of the project. The development phase will consist of working up the designs to the equivalent of RIBA Work Stage 3 and submitting a Stage 2 funding application to the NLHF in February / March 2022.

If a Stage 2 pass is achieved, the scheme will then be worked through to final design and realisation.

The selected Access Consultant will work closely with the Horniman’s project team which includes our Head of Estates, Head of Horticulture, Director Collections Care and Estates, two Client Project Managers, Content team, Learning team and the Exhibitions and Design Manager. A Capital Project Board, chaired by one of our Trustees, will sign off the different design stages. The Consultant teams involved will include Architectural and Exhibitions Design Teams, External Project Manager, Cost Manager, Sustainability and AV consultants among others.

The Horniman has committed itself to undertaking widespread consultation, co-production and evaluation over the development of its projects and has already discussed the Nature + Love project with a range of stakeholder groups. This process will continue during the development phase and the relevant consultants will be expected to participate in this and to integrate the results of the consultations into their designs.

**4.2 Constraints**

The galleries are all Grade 2\* and therefore planning permission and Listed Building Consent will be required for any changes.

The Gardens are within a Conservation Area and are Grade 2 Listed and therefore planning permission will be required for any changes. The majority of the site is also designated Metropolitan Open Land.

**4.3 Project Timing**

December 2021: Stage 1 result from NHLF

January 2022-February 2023: Development phase: design team procured and design completed to RIBA Work Stage 3

Feb./March 2023: Stage 2 submission to NHLF

July. 2023: Stage 2 result from NHLF

July. 2023 - June 2024: Final design and procurement

May. 2024 - February 2026: RIBA Stage 5 Construction