



Research brief for CPRE, the countryside charity and Natural England

Discover tranquillity

December 2023

Overview

CPRE, the countryside charity, in collaboration with Natural England, invite quotes from suitably experienced consultancies to discover people's views on tranquillity. Consultants will be required to carry out this research during January - May 2024. This work will lead to a comprehensive understanding of what tranquillity means around the country and inform future work towards a refreshed map of tranquillity in England.

Tranquillity is highly valued by many people and contributes to what makes a place special. It also enriches health, well-being, spiritual benefit and quality of life. But subtle changes in aspects including noise, visual intrusion and light pollution may have significant impacts on the tranquillity of places.

It is important to refresh our understanding of what people's perceptions are about what makes a place tranquil and what detracts from the experience of it, via a Participatory Appraisal approach. We want to involve as many people as possible in this public perception research, in both urban and rural areas, to ensure we get a representative and inclusive understanding of the factors that affect tranquillity. This research will focus on England. The findings from this research will become a core part of the national dataset to create updated tranquillity mapping in the future.

For further information, please contact Emma Marrington at CPRE: emmam@cpre.org.uk

Anyone wishing to submit a tender should do so by **midday on Friday 19 January 2024**. The invited quote and any supporting material should be sent by email to emmam@cpre.org.uk and chris.bolton@naturalengland.org.uk with 'Tender – discover tranquillity' in the subject header.

The commissioning organisations

CPRE, the countryside charity was founded in 1926 and believes in countryside and green spaces that are accessible to all, rich in nature and playing a crucial role in responding to the climate emergency. With a local CPRE group in almost every county, we're advocating nationwide for the kind of countryside we all want: one with sustainable, healthy communities and available to more people than ever, including those who haven't benefited

before. We've worked for almost a century to support and promote the countryside, and we'll be doing this for generations to come.

Natural England (NE) is the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, including landscape and people's access to and enjoyment of nature. We help to protect and restore our natural world. NE was established by an Act of Parliament in 2006. Our purpose is to help conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. We consider tranquillity to be an important contributor to the natural and cultural factors that influence the landscape character and quality of our landscapes and recognise the importance of updated tranquillity mapping to monitoring and managing landscape change.

Background

Tranquillity is primarily a natural resource. It reflects the degree to which people experience the environment unhindered by disruptive noise, movement and artificial lighting and structures. In a densely populated, built-up country like England tranquillity is scarce and its distribution is uneven. For many, the chance to experience tranquillity is what makes the countryside so special and different from cities, suburbs and towns where the experience of tranquillity may be much more localised. When we seek to be in places which give sweeping views, wide open skies, proximity to water and close experience of wildlife, we are searching for tranquillity. But subtle changes in noise, visual intrusion and light pollution may have significant impacts on the tranquillity of places.

Previous tranquillity mapping work was conducted by CPRE, Natural England and Newcastle and Northumbria Universities in 2005-2007 (reports linked below). This introduced the notion of tranquillity as a measure of the quality of people's experience of the countryside, as much as one of its inherent characteristics. With a bottom-up approach developed through participatory consultation, the methodology behind this work enabled a more detailed understanding of relative tranquillity than previously achieved. (By relative tranquillity we mean, for example, that a local urban green space can be relatively tranquil compared to the surrounding rural area but is just as valuable to the local community as somewhere remote in the countryside and deeply tranquil). Each 500m by 500m square of England was given a tranquillity score, based on 44 different factors which the research had identified adding to or detracting from people's feelings of tranquillity. (See Appendix 1)

Since then, one of the most significant policy implications for tranquillity has been its inclusion in the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012. Paragraph 185 b of the current NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should 'identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason'. Paragraph 102 b also refers to tranquillity as a possible criterion for the Local Green Space (LGS) designation. Recently published CPRE research (linked below) has revealed that since 2022, 24% of newly designated LGS cited tranquillity as a reason for designation.

The research we want to commission

CPRE and Natural England will be the lead organisations commissioning a first phase of tranquillity research, which will focus on a public perception survey to gather contemporary views about tranquillity eg what makes a place tranquil and what detracts from it. This will require the development of a Participatory Appraisal approach that leads to a up to date understanding of the experience of tranquillity.

This will include both qualitative and quantitative research methods to engage and involve a diverse range of people, with the approach adapted to make it inclusive. We would like to involve at least 5,000 people in this research. This may include for example, workshops and/or focus groups, gathering videos from the public, and an online survey.

It is anticipated that the research would primarily be based on:

- Desk research, to investigate how previous and current approaches to gathering people's views about tranquillity could be used to inform this research;
- Development of a participatory/engagement approach to gather views from a diverse range of people on tranquillity, which could include mini case studies, interviews, and creation of videos;
- Convening workshops or focus groups to gather people's views on what adds to or detracts from tranquillity;
- Quantitative surveys, based on the engagement approach developed, of both the public and stakeholders about the factors that add to or detract from tranquillity.

The consultants will need to discuss and agree the research plan at an inception meeting with CPRE and Natural England before commencing work.

The overarching objective for the research is:

- To refresh understanding of people's views on tranquillity and for this to inform a future England wide mapping project.

The questions this research should explore will include:

1. Have people's views on the factors which affect tranquillity, positively or negatively, changed since CPRE's previous survey work in 2005-7? (See Appendix 1)
2. What are people's views on tranquillity now? What factors affect this? Is tranquillity important to people?
3. Do views about tranquillity vary geographically? Do people's backgrounds eg age, socio economic factors, ethnicity, affect views on what makes a place tranquil or does not?

4. Can people's views about tranquil places be mapped eg places that people cite as being tranquil?
5. Can the factors which affect tranquillity positively or negatively be weighted in terms of significance? For example, in CPRE and Natural England's previous tranquillity work, the number of responses for each of the 44 option choices was converted into a percentage which provided a way of weighting each option choice in order of relevance.
6. What is the most effective way to integrate the findings of this public perception research in tranquillity mapping for England in the future?

Outputs

The consultant will be required to undertake this research and produce:

- 1) A detailed written report setting out the evidence gathered during the public perception research
- 2) An innovative way to communicate the research and people's views on tranquillity such as through mapping, videography, infographics

CPRE and Natural England will want an opportunity to comment on the initial draft of the research report and communication methods and for the consultants to provide further input based on our comments (see timescales below).

Budget

The budget for this research is within the range of £35,000-40,000 inclusive of expenses and VAT. The consultant would be expected to maintain regular contact with the project manager by email and telephone and to participate in two teleconferences/Teams calls with CPRE and Natural England, one at the start of the project and one to discuss the draft research findings. The budget will also include reasonable travel expenses for development of the research and workshops/focus groups.

Proposals

We are looking for short proposals which provide a fixed price for completing this work, details of previous relevant experience for the staff to be involved in the project and confirmation that the work could be completed to the timescales set out below. It should also include details of how the consultants propose to undertake the work (approach and methods).

Costs and other information supplied in tender documents should include the following details:

- The number, roles and experience of staff involved
- The daily rate for each person

- Estimated number of days for each person

A completed and signed Pricing Schedule must be submitted with the tender document.

Timelines

Our indicative timeline is as follows:

Thursday 7 December 2023 - project brief issued

Friday 19 January 2024 - deadline for submissions of tenders

w/c 22 January '24 - successful consultant appointed

w/c 22 or 29 January '24 - inception meeting in person or via Teams

25 March - consultants submit draft report

20 May - consultant submits final report to CPRE and Natural England

Contract and confidentiality

Tenderers shall not issue any form of publicity or advertisement regarding this process without the prior written consent of CPRE and Natural England.

The appointed consultant will be required to sign and adhere to the contents of a Services Agreement which that will outline the obligations of both CPRE, Natural England and the consultant.

Previous relevant reports by CPRE (and partners):

[Mapping Tranquillity: Defining and assessing a valuable resource](#), CPRE and The Countryside Agency (2005)

[Saving tranquil places: how to protect and promote a vital asset](#), CPRE, (2006)

[Developing an intrusion map of England: background and methodology](#), CPRE and LUC (2007)

[Intrusion map: England early 1960s](#), CPRE (2007)

[Intrusion map: England early 1990s](#), (CPRE) 2007

[Intrusion map: England 2007](#), (CPRE) 2007

[England's fragmented countryside: ranking of counties and unitary authorities](#), CPRE (2007)

[Tranquillity Mapping: Developing a robust methodology for planning support](#), CPRE and Northumbria University, Newcastle University and Bluespace Environments (2008)

[Give peace a chance: has planning policy contributed to rural tranquillity?](#), CPRE (2015)

[Local Green Spaces 2023: Increasingly important for community well-being and nature recovery](#), CPRE (2023)

Previous relevant reports by Natural England:

[Understanding tranquillity: The role of Participatory Appraisal consultation in defining and assessing a valuable resource](#) (CRN92) (2005)

Examples of other relevant publications:

[Broadly engaging with tranquillity in protected landscapes: A matter of perspective identified in GIS](#), Denise Hewlett et al, University of Winchester (2016)

[Tranquillity map for Wales](#), Natural Resources Wales and LUC (2022)

[Visually tranquil places: background and methodology](#), Natural Resources Wales and LUC (2022)

[Tranquillity and place - sound environment \(part 1\): background report and methodology](#), Natural Resources Wales and LUC (2023)

[Characterising and mapping potential and experienced tranquillity: From a state of mind to a cultural ecosystem service](#), Ross S. Purves and Flurina M. Wartmann (2023)