

INVITATION TO TENDER

Footpath Upgrade in Wildern Local Nature Reserve, Hedge End

Issued by: Hedge End Town Council

Hedge End Town Council (HETC) invites tenders for the upgrade and resurfacing of a permissive footpath within Wildern Local Nature Reserve, Hedge End.

The project requires the construction of an all-weather footpath surfaced with self-binding gravel, designed to be sympathetic to the ecological setting of the reserve. Works will include the careful management of surface tree roots and, where necessary, the installation of raised walkways to protect sensitive habitats and ensure accessibility.

Project information

Name of Project: Footpath Upgrade in Wildern Local Nature Reserve

Project Budget: between £35,000 and £42,500

Location: Grid Ref: 448787.03,113074.26

What3words: ///round.tubes.hunt to
///status.cliff.films (approximate locations)

Name/ Address of Owner: Hedge End Town Council, 2000 Centre, St John's Road, Hedge End, SO30 4AF

IMPORTANT: A site visit is advisable to assess access, gain detailed measurements, location of nearby properties and access points to and around the site. To arrange a site visit please contact Brett Athow on 01489 780440 or preferably by email opsmanager@hedgeend-tc.gov.uk

1. Tender Process

1.1 Hedge End Town Council wishes to employ a Principal Contractor to carry out the supply and installation of approximately 350m of woodland path, boardwalk and associated drainage.

1.2 Tenderers are required to submit a fixed price lump sum tender on the Form of Tender provided in this document.

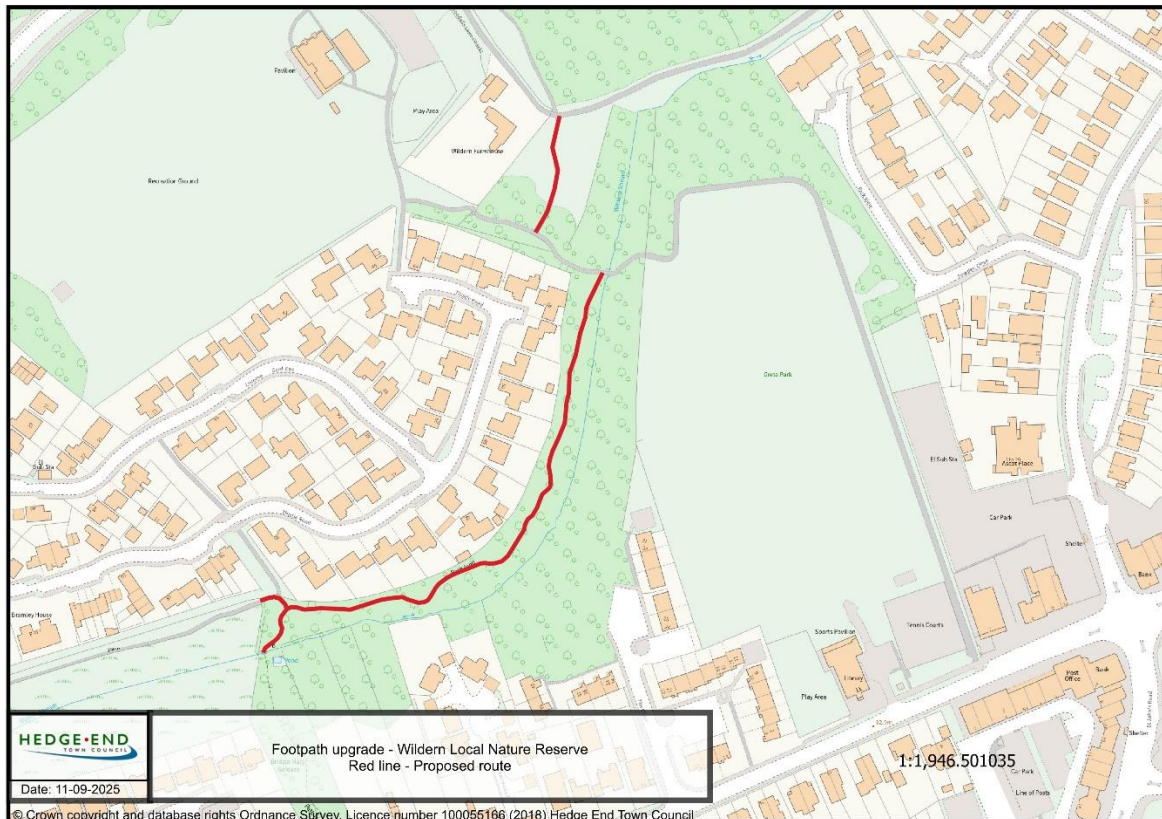
- 1.3 Tenders should be returned either in a sealed envelope bearing no company identification and marked “*TENDER FOR Footpath Upgrade in Wildern Local Nature Reserve*” to the Town Clerk, 2000 Centre, St John’s Road, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 4AF, or submitted via email to townclerk@hedgeend-tc.gov.uk. All submissions must be received by **2 February 2026 (noon)**.
- 1.4 Hedge End Town Council does not bind itself to accept any tender. The Council reserves the right to delete any items from the tender should the tender exceed the budget. No payment will be made in respect of any expense incurred by the tenderers in submitting a tender.
- 1.5 Tenderers should liaise with Brett Athow, Operations Manager - Tel: 01489 780440 or opsmanager@hedgeend-tc.gov.uk during the tender period regarding any queries or concerns on the content of this specification.
- 1.6 The successful contractor will need to show the following at the time they submit a tender:
- A copy of your certificate of public liability insurance
 - A copy of your company’s Health and Safety policy.
 - Evidence and two references of previous experience on similar sites.
 - Environmental and Ecological — A brief summary outlining your approach to minimising environmental impacts and protecting local biodiversity during the design and construction of the footpath.

Project Aims

- 1.1 To install a minimum 1.2m wide all weather woodland footpath suitable for use throughout the year.
- 1.2 To limit the environmental impact of the works and provide environmental enhancements where possible.
- 1.3 To manage surface water to reduce instance of flooding and erosion, whilst maintaining the natural hydrology of the site.
- 1.4 To provide solutions to the footpath construction that allow the woodland to thrive.

2. Site Information

- 2.1 The Contractor should visit the site at their own expense to satisfy themselves as to any conditions on site that may affect in any manner whatsoever the execution of the works detailed hereafter.



2.2 A designated compound will be agreed prior to works commencing. The area must be secure and safe and must not impact on the building or facilities. The council reserve the right to determine the final location of the compound.

3. Scope of Works

- 3.1 Construct approximately 350m of footpath using a self-binding gravel surface and wooden edge restraints.
- 3.2 Pathway to be a minimum of 1.2m wide, unless alternative widths are agreed on-site due to local constraints.
- 3.3 Path alignment should generally follow existing desire lines or established worn routes. Adjustments or deviations may be required where this reduces ecological impact, particularly in areas with significant surface tree roots or sensitive habitats.
- 3.4 Install raised walkways as required in wet or low-lying areas. Walkways should be constructed from FSC-certified timber or recycled plastic, selected for durability and minimal environmental impact.

- 3.5 Provide drainage measures to maintain a dry and stable surface; shallow side ditches, stone-filled trenches, or other sustainable solutions.
- 3.6 Install a porous geotextile membrane across the prepared path area to suppress weeds and stabilise the foundation layer.
- 3.7 Lay a minimum 100mm depth of Type 3 scalpings, compacted mechanically to form a stable sub-base.
- 3.8 Apply 50–75mm of Romsey Path Aggregate in two equal layers, each thoroughly consolidated to achieve a robust and durable surface.
- 3.9 Form the surface with a gentle camber or cross fall to ensure effective water run-off and prevent standing water.
- 3.10 On completion of path construction, all boundaries between the path edge and surrounding ground shall be reinstated and dressed with clean topsoil to ensure a natural finish and promote revegetation.
- 3.11 The path shall be constructed in a manner that maximises accessibility where practicable within the constraints of the woodland environment, and in line with the principles of the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.12 Upon completion, remove all waste materials from site and dispose of or recycle responsibly.

4. Site Access and Protection

- 4.1 Site access is limited and must be carefully coordinated to avoid unnecessary damage to sensitive habitats.
- 4.2 No unauthorised vehicle, plant or storage is permitted outside of the agreed working areas.
- 4.3 Protective fencing or barriers shall be used as required to prevent intrusion into ecologically sensitive zones.

5. Environmental and Ecological Considerations

- 5.1 The successful contractor will need to demonstrate at the time they submit a tender how they will mitigate for environmental and ecological considerations.

5.2 The Wildern LNR is an ecologically sensitive area. All work must comply with:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Hedge End Town Council Biodiversity Strategy
- Any recommendations provided by the Council's Operations Manager or Eastleigh Borough Council Bio-diversity Officers.

Contractors must:

- Avoid damage to tree roots, nesting birds, or protected species.
- Prepare a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for Council approval at least 14 days prior to the start of the works.

6. Timeline

6.1 Anticipated pre-contract timeline:

Action	Date
Invitation to Tender opened	17 December 2025 (+37 Days)
Site visits with Operations Manager available by appointment	20 December 2025 – 30 January 2026
Final Tender closing date (12:00 noon) Incorporating any design changes	2 February 2026
Recreation & Amenities Committee	11 February 2026
Full Council	18 February 2026
Award contract	27 February 2026
Works on site can begin	March 2026

7. Site Management during installation

7.1 A project co-ordinator or single point of contact must be nominated by the successful tenderer who should be readily contactable to deal with any queries and problems that may arise.

- 7.2 Access to the site for the Contractor will be limited to the specified works area only, and the contractor should not block the entrances to the adjoining property.
- 7.3 There are no welfare services on the site and therefore the contractor will have to provide external welfare facilities for the duration of the works.
- 7.4 All equipment and machinery should be fit for purpose and maintained in accordance with current legislation i.e. MOT, Tax, LOLER, PUWER etc. The Contractor shall ensure that any construction noise does not cause nuisance to any users of the building, adjacent buildings or roads etc. outside the site boundary.
- 7.5 Radios are permitted however the volume level should be kept at a reasonable level as not to cause a nuisance to the adjoining properties. and no smoking is permitted at any times.
- 7.6 The Contractor shall keep the site tidy at all times. Skips and rubbish must be kept within the agreed compound area and should be inaccessible to the public. Nothing is to be stored outside of the compound without prior written agreement by HETC.
- 7.7 The Contractor will need to supply the Town Council with a copy of their site risk assessment, method statement, Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a copy of their public liability insurance for approval at least 14 working days before the start of the project.
- 7.8 The Contractor shall advise the Town Council immediately of any deficiencies in the Method Statements of Risk Assessments, or unforeseen hazards to Health and Safety which may become apparent as the project proceeds. This includes notification of any RIDDOR incidents during construction.
- 7.9 The contractor is advised to satisfy themselves of the extent and location of all underground services in order to safely undertake the works. The contractor is to allow for all costs associated with protecting from and working with the materials within this tender.
- 7.10 The Contractor shall take all precautions as are necessary to protect the Health and Safety of all persons employed by him and shall comply with all the requirements of any Acts, Regulations, orders or directions pertaining to the health and safety of employed persons, the employees of the Council and all other persons.
- 7.11 The Contractor shall allow the Town Council representatives such access as may be required to locations, vehicles or operations used in relation to this contract.

7.12 The Contractor shall be required to attend such meetings as the Operations Manager or their nominated representative may require for the administration and successful completion of this Contract.

7.13 The Contractor will be held accountable for, and shall make good any damage whatsoever caused as a result of these works during the construction of the footpath to adjoining buildings, gates, paths, roadways, walls, fences, gardens, trees, etc. Full payment may be withheld until the site and adjoining areas are left in a state deemed acceptable, and to the satisfaction of the Town Council.

8. Limitation of working hours

8.1 Works are permitted to be carried out during normal working hours, 0800 and 1700 Monday to Friday. Out of hours' work may be permitted by the Town Council, subject to the nature of works. Noisy works will generally not be permitted at weekends.

9. Pricing and Payment

9.1 The Contractor shall supply and do everything necessary for the proper execution and completion of the work that may be reasonably inferred from the Contract Documents whether described in detail or not, without any extra payment in respect thereof.

9.2 Payment will be upon completion of the works to the satisfaction of the Town Council.

10. Evaluation Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated based on:

Criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Quality	40%
Environmental Approach	20%

Shortlisted contractors may be invited for an interview or site visit discussion.

11. Disclaimer

Hedge End Town Council reserves the right to:

- Cancel the tender process at any time.

- No obligation to award the contract to the tenderer with the lowest tender value.
- Seek clarification or request further information.

FORM OF TENDER

Footpath Upgrade in Wildern Local Nature Reserve, Hedge End

Supplier Name:

I/We the person named below hereby offer and agree on the acceptance of this Tender or any part thereof by the Council to provide the Goods / Services to the Council as described in and in accordance with the Invitation to Tender.

I/We hereby offer to provide the said Services for the sums properly due under the Contract as calculated in accordance with the Pricing Schedule attached.

Tendered Total Cost (in GBP): £.....

I/We confirm that:

- I/We are fully conversant with all the contract documentation included in the Invitation to Tender; and
- This tender is submitted strictly in accordance with that contract documentation and is without any conditions or qualifications whatsoever; and
- On being called upon to do so by the Council, I/We shall execute the form of Agreement acknowledging our willingness to be bound by the Contract.

I/We offer to execute the complete work within.....weeks from start date on site.

I/We undertake to start on site within weeks of receipt of an order.

Person authorised to submit the Tender:

Name:

Position:

Dated:

Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Ecological Constraints Summary
- **Appendix B:** HETC Biodiversity Strategy
- **Appendix C:** Site photos

Appendix A – Ecological Constraints Summary

1. Overview

Wildern Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) due to its valuable mix of habitats, including semi-natural woodland, ponds, wetland, and species-rich grassland. The SINC designation reflects the site's importance at a county level for biodiversity and ecological function.

2. Key Ecological Constraints

2.1 SINC Status

- SINC's are non-statutory sites designated for their local ecological value.
- The **precautionary principle** applies where there is uncertainty about potential ecological harm, protective measures must be implemented.
- Works that could impact habitat structure, water flow, soil integrity, or the presence and diversity of wildlife species must be fully justified and mitigated.
- Contractors must demonstrate how they will minimise ecological disturbance.

2.2 Trees and Root Protection (including TPOs)

- The area is protected by a Woodland Tree Preservation Order that protects all trees within the woodland.
- No-dig construction methods must be used where tree roots are present.
- Root Protection Areas (RPAs) must be respected, with protective fencing installed prior to works where applicable.
- Visible roots must not be cut or compacted — path construction in these areas should use root-bridging techniques or an alternative route.

2.3 Nesting Birds (March–August)

- Woodland, scrub, and hedgerow areas support nesting birds from March to August.
 - No vegetation clearance should occur during this period unless a pre-works nesting bird check by a qualified ecologist confirms no active nests.

2.4 Bats

- Mature trees may support bat roosts, and the surrounding area offers high-quality foraging habitat.

- No direct tree work has been identified as part of this project.
- No artificial lighting should be used during or after works.

2.5 Amphibians and Reptiles

- The wetland, pond edges, and grassland areas may support common amphibians (frogs, toads, newts) and reptiles (e.g. slow worms, grass snakes).
 - Excavation and movement of materials must avoid these areas unless proper safeguards are in place.
 - Raised walkways or minimal-impact surfacing may be required to avoid habitat damage.

2.6 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

- No INNS are currently recorded on-site; however, vigilance is required for species such as Himalayan balsam or Japanese knotweed.
- Any sightings must be reported, and control measures followed under biosecurity best practices.

3. Working Methods and Ecological Safeguards

The awarded contractor are required to:

- Produce a **Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)** outlining:
 - Ecological risk mitigation
 - Pollution prevention
 - Access and compound location
 - Tree and habitat protection measures
- Use low-impact machinery suitable for sensitive sites.
- Avoid material storage or compaction in vegetated, wet, or root-heavy areas.
- Install temporary protective fencing around key ecological features before works begin.
- Ensure all site operatives are briefed on ecological risks prior to works.

4. Relevant Legislation and Policy

Works must comply with:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- TPO's - Town and Country Planning act 1990 as amended
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Section 41
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Environment Act 2021 – Biodiversity Net Gain (for future compliance)

- Local authority policy for SINC's and biodiversity

5. Summary of Constraints by Zone

Area Type	Ecological Feature	Constraint / Risk	Required Action
Woodland (SINC/ TPO)	Tree roots, bats, birds	Root damage, habitat disturbance	No-dig, fencing, bird checks
Wetland margins	Amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates	Habitat loss, water pollution	Raised walkways, buffer zones
Grassland edges	Reptiles, invertebrates, INNS risk	Soil compaction, invasive spread	No stockpiling, watch for INNS
Ponds and ditches	Amphibians, invertebrates, water quality	Pollution, habitat disruption	Use porous materials, no runoff
Hedgerows / scrub	Nesting birds	Breeding disturbance (Mar–Aug)	Time clearance, ecologist checks

6. Ecological Supervision and Pre-Start Checks

- A pre-construction walkover must be arranged with Hedge End Town Council:
 - Identify protected habitats and species
 - Mark sensitive areas for fencing or avoidance
 - Confirm seasonal restrictions

Appendix C - Hedge End Town Council Biodiversity Strategy

<https://hedgeend-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Biodiversity-strategy.pdf>

Appendix D – Images of the existing path

