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Request for Quotation

**Investigation into the delivery of biodiversity units in the West Surrey Hills AONB**

## Request for Quotation

**Investigation into the delivery of biodiversity units in the West Surrey Hills AONB**

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 **midday on Monday 21st November 2022**

* Email: molly.easton@naturalengland.org.uk
* Date: Monday 21st November 2022
* Time: Midday

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**

Molly Easton 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 04-Nov-2022 at 17:30 GMT |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 18-Nov-2022 at 17:30 GMT |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 21-Nov-2022 at 12:00 GMT |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 22-Nov-2022 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 22-Nov-2022 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 22-Nov-2022 to 31-March-2023 |

### 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):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| “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. |

### 

### 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 RFQ 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 [Condensed Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) 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/).

**Investigation into the delivery of biodiversity units in the West Surrey Hills AONB**

1. **Background to Natural England** 
   1. Natural England is the government’s advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone.
   2. Natural England aims for a well-managed Nature Recovery Network across land, water and sea, which creates and protects resilient ecosystems rich in wildlife and natural beauty, enjoyed by people and widely benefiting society.
   3. Through our core programmes, we aim to achieve resilient landscapes and seas, sustainable development, and greener farming and fisheries with an emphasis on connecting people with nature for their own and society’s wellbeing, enjoyment and prosperity.
   4. For us, nature encompasses natural beauty, wildlife and the geology that underpins landscape character. Hence, a key part of our work relates to supporting the conservation, enhancement, understanding and enjoyment of England's protected landscapes - National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These areas are designated for the exceptional scenic quality of their landscapes, which are the result of centuries of interaction between people and nature.
   5. We work with farmers and land managers; business and industry; planners and developers; national and local government; interest groups and local communities to help them improve their local environment.
2. **Background to this work** 
   1. Defra and Natural England are investing over £2.4 million in 12 landscape-scale nature recovery projects across the country, working with partners to conserve and restore nature and adapt to climate change.
   2. These multi-partnership projects take forward the objectives of the Nature Recovery Network (NRN) at scale, including delivering habitat creation and restoration, species recovery, carbon sequestration, clean air and water, and improved access.
   3. These projects are led by Natural England’s area teams, working collaboratively with local partners, and supported nationally. They provide a focal point for nature’s recovery in the chosen areas. They build on and complement other large-scale nature recovery projects, such as those at Purbeck in Dorset, and Wigan Flashes in Greater Manchester.
   4. The projects will help improve our landscape’s resilience to climate change, enabling species to thrive while supporting livelihoods and the local economy. They will provide natural solutions to reduce carbon emissions, and manage flood risk and enable people to enjoy and connect with nature where they live, work and play – benefiting people’s health and wellbeing.
   5. The projects will demonstrate national delivery of the international commitment to protect at least 30% of land by 2030 (30by30) and help to achieve the Environment Act’s new, legally binding target to halt the decline in species abundance by 2030.
   6. The projects aim to identify opportunities to enhance and create habitat, alongside other objectives, that could be funded by developers to achieve an uplift in ‘biodiversity units’ to achieve biodiversity net gain. This will show how biodiversity net gain (BNG), alongside other public and private finance, can support the delivery of the NRN.
   7. Heathland Connections is the NRP in Natural England’s Thames Solent area. It is an ambitious partnership of landowners and farmers across over 8,000ha of the western most section of the Surrey Hills AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The project will enhance, restore, and create wildlife-rich habitat across the landscape, with large areas already designated as Thursley, Hankley and Frensham Commons SPA (Special Protection Area). The SPA is surrounded by heathlands owned by partners, who are keen to work closer together. Currently attracting 30 million visitors annually, aided by its proximity to London and other significant urban areas, the project will also produce and deliver a ‘gold standard’ sustainable recreation plan, not only to encourage active travel and improve access and connection to nature, but also to find innovative solutions to associated management challenges, such as habitat degradation, disturbance to ground nesting birds, and the emerging threat of more frequent and more devastating wildfires.
   8. As part of its work to attract further investment into the landscape, Heathland Connections partners are seeking to understand where in the landscape has the greatest potential to deliver Biodiversity units in the context of current and predicted development trends in the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and National Character Area (NCA) within the project boundary (Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils and the West Greensands NCA), and surrounding LPAs and NCAs.
   9. The main aim of this project is to understand where in the landscape has the greatest potential to deliver Biodiversity units, work with landowners and farmers to understand the barriers and opportunities for delivering these projects, and to identify a pipeline of habitat enhancement and creation projects that align with the NRN aims. These projects could be offered to developers to fund as ready-made offsite BNG projects.
   10. The objectives are:
       * Conduct a high-level, desk-top estimate of the baseline Biodiversity units within the project boundary (Appendix One). Data should be presented on the area (ha) of each habitat type, including irreplaceable habitats, and set out a hypothetical quantification of existing biodiversity units, based on assumptions about condition and strategic significance.
       * Analyse current and future development pressure within Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils and West Greensand National Character Area (NCA), and surrounding LPAs and NCAs, and investigate expected key trends from a Defra BNG marketplace in Surrey and the South East.
       * Design and run spatial simulations to see where in the project boundary has the greatest potential to deliver Biodiversity units, based on assumptions about current and future demand for off-site Biodiversity units. This should identify habitat enhancement and creation projects which could be offered to developers, and which align with the aims of Heathland Connections.
       * Better understand how the Defra BNG Metric 3.1 assesses lowland heath and the extent to which it incentivises/disincentivises enhancement or creation of lowland heathland.
       * Use the high-level desk-top estimate and simulations to run focused landowner engagement sessions on BNG, considering the barriers and opportunities for delivering Biodiversity units on their land.
3. **Project Scope** 
   1. The first stage of this project will be desk-based, focused on:
      * Creating a high-level, desk-top estimate of the baseline biodiversity units within the project boundary.
      * Producing an analysis of current and future development pressure within Surrey and surrounding areas, as well as of the key trends expected from a BNG marketplace in Surrey and the South East.
      * Design methodology to identify habitat enhancement and creation projects within the project boundary which deliver projected demand for Biodiversity units.
   2. The second stage of the project will be working with Heathland Connections partners to deliver communication materials for dedicated engagement workshops with landowners and farmers on the barriers and opportunities to delivering BNG on their land. Consultants should provide user friendly maps for these workshops and could provide suggestions for the workshops themselves, such as considering what the alternative land use may be without a BNG market. If there is resource and capacity, consultants could join these sessions.
4. **Project Requirements** 
   1. Natural England would like to commission consultants to deliver four outputs in the following order:
      * Output One: High level desk-top assessment of the baseline Biodiversity units within the project boundary. Data should be presented on the area (ha) of habitat types, highlighting irreplaceable habitats and a hypothetical quantification of existing biodiversity units, based on assumptions about condition.
      * Output Two: Quantitative analysis of current and predicted development in Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils and West Greensand NCA, and neighbouring LPAs and NCAs to produce several scenarios relating to what developers may require in terms of Biodiversity units and habitat type.
      * Output Three: Using information from Output One and Output Two, design methodology to identify habitat enhancement and creation projects within the project boundary which align with the aims of the Heathland Connections project and deliver the projected demand for Biodiversity units. This Output should clarify the projected demand for enhancement and/or creation projects relating to lowland heath. It should also test how the Defra BNG Metric 3.1 assesses lowland heath and the extent to which it incentivises/disincentivises lowland heath enhancement or creation. Methodology for this output to be agreed with consultant.
      * Output Four: User friendly maps of Output One (showcasing baseline Biodiversity units) and Output Three (showcasing options for habitat enhancement and creation projects) to use as springboard for engagement with landowners. Consultants to offer support for landowner engagement sessions if there’s resource and capacity.
   2. It is anticipated this contract will be desk based with virtual meetings and calls to make regular contact with the Project Manager and wider Heathland Connections team.
   3. It is expected the consultants will hold:
      * An inception meeting with the Project Manager and wider Heathland Connections team to finalise the scope of the project and to ensure close liaison that allows room to input views and information.
      * A meeting with the Project Manager after completing Output One to discuss progress.
      * A meeting with the Project Manager after completing Output Two to discuss progress and agree methodology for Output Three.
      * A meeting with the Project Manager after completing Output Three to discuss progress and design user friendly maps in advance of the landowner engagement sessions.
      * Final meeting, at which all the outputs in paragraph 4.1 are delivered if they haven’t been throughout the life of the contract.

**5. Timetable**

5.1 **PLEASE NOTE –** It is anticipated that this contract will run from **22nd November 2022 to 31st March 2023 only to end no later than 31st March 2023**. A timetable is set out below in section 5.2. 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

5.2 Quotations should be received by **21st November 2022** so that the contract period for preparation of the work can commence as soon as possible thereafter. We would like consultants to set out a draft timetable in their quotation, for delivering the outputs in paragraphs 4 and 5, that will be agreed at the initial meeting with the working group. The below timetable sets out suggested timings.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Initial meeting with consultants and steering group to agree scope of work | November 2022, date to be confirmed once appointed |
| Regular meetings between consultants and steering group to agree content, direction and progress | As specified in brief |
| Final meeting with NRN team | By end of March 2023 |

1. **Plan format** 
   1. Maps, plans, illustrations, matrices and photographs must be full colour where original material is in colour or where colour is essential to preparation of new, illustrative material.
2. **Standards of Work**
   1. Consultants should note that unsatisfactory work which does not follow the brief (or any variation agreed with the client or Natural England) or which is not submitted according to the above timetable and/or output requirement may compromise the client’s eligibility for grant aid. The client is responsible for monitoring the work of the consultant, in terms of time spent and cost incurred, to ensure that the plan is delivered on schedule and within budget. The contract is between the consultant and the applicant, not between the consultant and Defra. Natural England must be alerted as soon as unforeseen cost or delays are predicted
3. **Tender documents**
   * It is strongly recommended that tender documents are received from independent, experienced consultants who have a wide and proven knowledge and experience of Biodiversity Net Gain, as well as a very good understanding of sustainable development and habitat enhancement and creation, particularly relating to lowland heathland. To enable a full appraisal of the tenders, the following information is required from the consultant(s);
     1. Range of professional skills offered;
     2. Evidence of successful completion of similar projects demonstrating the qualities listed above
     3. Names and CV’s of individuals who will prepare the plan;
     4. Details of any sub-contractors;
     5. Total cost + VAT which should be broken down to show; a) Day rates for each member of the consultant’s team; b) Travel and related expenses; c) A separate rate for additional meetings beyond those identified in the brief; d) Other expenses; e) Plan report production costs; (Please note that day rates and expenses should be included in the total overall cost as there will be no allowance for adding in these costs later). Where relevant, information should also be included on health and safety policy, risk assessments, professional indemnity insurance, public liability insurance and employer’s liability insurance.

1. **Prices**

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

**11 Bid format – pricing schedule**

11.1 **Include a pricing schedule** ensuring that costs can clearly be seen against personnel, travel and subsistence, materials, other identified costs, and that these link to core activities/tasks. Example below (adapt as appropriate)

11.2 VAT – please confirm whether your business is VAT registered.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Individual | Number of days | Daily rate excluding VAT | Additional costs incl T&S (please specify) | Total excluding VAT |
| 1. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Final total excluding VAT |  |  |  |  |  |
| Final total including VAT (if relevant) |  |  |  |  |  |

**12. Evaluation criteria**

12.1 We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) and on quality criteria (highlighted below in 10.2)

Price – 50%

Quality-50%

12.2 The following quality criteria is weighted in accordance with the importance and relevance attached to each one.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Quality Criteria** | **Weighting (%)** | **To include:** |
| 1**. Method** What is your proposed methodology to deliver the outlined tasks?  Understanding of the key aims and requirements of the project, tasks and intended outputs | 20 | An initial outline of what material/expertise is to be used and how evidence will be collected, and findings presented  Identification of key tasks, with a proposed timeline and milestones.  Clear stakeholder engagement plan |
| **2.Staff and skills.**  Evidence of previous research skills, knowledge, and experience  Key Personnel, their roles, and contributions to the project | 25 | Refer to section 4  CVs and a minimum of two relevant examples of work including names and contact details for these clients/referees  The team structure and projected time allocations for all individuals in days, set against your identified main tasks.  Link to pricing schedule. (See 11.1) |
| **3. Understanding of Risk/Constraints** | 5 | Identify risks and how they will be mitigated |

**13. Sustainability**

The successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring Natural England is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to Natural England’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project. The successful contractor is likely to be able to provide a copy of their environmental policy and any environmental accreditation schemes such as ISO 14001 or EMAS which they have been awarded or are working towards.

1. a. Operational Sustainability - Explain to Natural England what your organisation is doing to incorporate sustainability within its operations. This may include any details you are able to provide in relation to steps you may be taking to reduce your carbon footprint.
2. b. Environmental Management - Detail what you will do to assess the environmental impact of completing this project and provide mitigations. Examples may include operational measures to reduce emissions and noise impacts, efficient energy use, minimising the environmental impact of transport in delivery, efficient use of raw materials and minimisation of waste where possible.

Criteria 1 to 3 will be scored as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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. |

**14. Quote/Tender & Contract Timescales**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 04-Nov-2022 at 17:30 BST / GMT |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 18-Nov-2022 at 17:30 BST / GMT |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 21-Nov-2022 at 12:00 BST / GMT |
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**Contract Management**

This contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by:

* Molly Easton, Local Nature Recovery Senior Adviser, Thames Solent Area Team, Natural England
* [molly.easton@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:molly.easton@naturalengland.org.uk)
* Telephone: 07823461875

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

Please invoice Natural England 50% by end of January 2023 and the remaining 50%, after the work is complete at end of March 2023.

### 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.

**End**

**Appendix One**

Shapefiles can be downloaded of the following:

1. The Heathland Connections project boundary
2. The 5km buffer around the Heathland Connections project boundary
3. The Heathland Connections project boundary with a 5km buffer

