

Invitation to Tender

Consultant Brief for a Specialist to Deliver Pollinator-Focused Habitat Enhancements And Community Engagement Events for the New Life on the Old West Project

Start Date: 03-05-2021

End Date: 30-09-2023



Procurement is being undertaken by Cambridgeshire ACRE

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ITT preparation date: 15-Feb-2021

INTRODUCTION

Cambridgeshire ACRE is managing the delivery of the 'New Life on the Old West' project (NLOW), which is being funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This is a 3-year project running from October 2020 until the end of September 2023.

This project seeks to establish connectivity and ecological resilience in the Cambridgeshire Fens between core wetland nature reserves: National Trust's Wicken Fen and RSPB's Ouse Fen and Ouse Washes. It will do so by creating stepping-stones of new and enhanced small-scale habitats along a corridor centred on the Old West River, benefiting a range of habitats and species. Re-connecting dispersed species and restoring ecological processes will be achieved through habitat improvements on the network of fenland ditches and other waterbodies, farmland and community green spaces.

There will be new opportunities for local people to discover, experience, and appreciate their fenland natural heritage and green spaces. This should increase their sense of connection to fenland wildlife and to others within their community, engender a desire to become enthusiastic stewards of their local environment, and an inspiration to other communities within the fens, and beyond.

Cambridgeshire ACRE is seeking the services of a suitably qualified ecologist to deliver a range of pollinator-focused:

- Habitat enhancements on community green spaces and surrounding farmland, engaging, training and leading local volunteers to deliver the work.
- Community training and environmental education activities, delivered to a wide range of audiences including adults, families and school and community groups.

To be successfully complete this role, you will need to have expert knowledge of fenland pollinator insects and the habitats they need to thrive. You will also bring experience of delivering engaging, interactive, and inclusive community engagement/learning events around nature conservation, working with a wide range of audiences.

APPROACH

Working with the NLOW Delivery Team, the successful consultant will lead and manage the delivery of a range of habitat enhancements aimed at creating new and enhancing existing habitat features for pollinator species in the Old West landscape. These enhancements will include digging small ponds, sowing wildflower seeds, and planting wildflower plugs.

The plans and designs for these habitat enhancements have already been developed and will be provided to the consultant at the start of the project. Similarly, all the landowners involved in this work have entered into agreements that they are happy for the enhancements to be delivered on their land. Cambridgeshire ACRE will provide the consultant with the contact details for each of the landowners and will introduce the consultant to them. It will then be the consultant's responsibility to arrange permission to access land and complete the work with the landowners.

At the same time as benefitting wildlife within the Old West River landscape, the consultant will use these enhancements as an opportunity to engage local people in the conservation and management of their

community's green spaces and surrounding farmland. People will gain new skills, and develop new behaviours towards fenland nature, and the role people can play in protecting the nature on their doorstep. The NLOW Delivery Team, with assistance from the consultant, will lead volunteer recruitment for this work. It is vital that the successful consultant factors in community involvement and training into the delivery of this work, and outlines their strategy for achieving this within their tender application.

To facilitate these habitat enhancements, Cambridgeshire ACRE will supply the consultant with tools and equipment as required for volunteers. The successful consultant will be expected to grow all wildflower plugs using volunteers or as an in-kind contribution to the project.

The NLOW project will also deliver a range of community education and training events, raising awareness of fenland biodiversity, and engaging people in nature-based activities. A detailed Activity Plan has been developed for the NLOW project, with five distinct activity sub-projects. The successful consultant will lead on the delivery of the pollinator-focussed activities within the 'Community Green Spaces' sub-project.

The NLOW Delivery Team, with assistance from the consultant, will advertise and promote these activities to ensure our engagement targets are met. The NLOW Team will also be responsible for organising the venues necessary for event delivery. The consultant will be responsible for producing all the materials needed to ensure that these events are exciting, engaging, and inclusive for a wide range of people.

The consultant will need to be able to work flexibly, as it is expected that a number of the events, and habitat creation work parties, will take place at weekends and in evenings, outside of normal working hours. In addition, to achieve these tasks, the consultant is expected to comply with all current legislation and Cambridgeshire Acre risk assessments regarding, Covid-19 biosecurity, environmental sustainability, equality, disability discrimination and data protection.

SPECIFICATION OF TASKS TO BE COMPLETED

More specifically, the consultant will need to:

1. Deliver two pond creation events, digging and lining small ponds (c.4 m²) alongside community volunteers. All equipment and materials will be provided by the NLOW delivery team. To be delivered between May 2021 – August 2023.
2. Deliver wildflower enhancements (sowing seeds or planting plugs) at two ponds that have been created or enlarged by independent contractors, working with community volunteers to achieve this. All equipment and materials will be provided by the NLOW delivery team or by the volunteers themselves. To be delivered between May 2021 – August 2023.
3. Deliver the creation or enhancement of 17 flower-rich areas, working with landowners, farmers and community volunteers to prepare and scarify the land where necessary, sow wildflower seeds and grow and plant wildflower plugs. To be delivered between May 2021 – August 2023.
4. Deliver three demonstration and learning activities aimed at adults. These will be held at community green spaces, educating people about the importance of wildflowers and pollinators. These activities will support future work to grow and plant wildflowers across NLOW green space and farmland enhancement sites. Attendees will be encouraged to consider how they can change their own garden management practices to support pollinators. The wider concept of NLOW and providing 'stepping-

stones' in the landscape will be relayed, as well as the habitat needs of the key species. To be delivered during the spring and summer of 2021, 2022 and 2023.

5. Deliver eight family activity sessions building bug hotels, planting wildflower plugs and learning about pollinators. Held in all the parishes in the project area, on community green space. Attendees will learn the importance of creating a haven for wild creatures and will be introduced to the habitat needs of the NLOW key species. To be delivered during spring and summer of 2021, 2022 and 2023.
6. Deliver five primary school events, in which children will sow and grow wildflower plugs, learning about NLOW key species and the wider NLOW project. The consultant will organise and arrange visits to key local green spaces, connecting with learning opportunities with practical work planting wildflowers the school children have grown. To be delivered between spring 2022 and summer 2023.
7. Submit quarterly progress reports to the NLOW Delivery Team and produce a final report to be submitted by August 2023.

TIMETABLE

All work and any final outputs must be completed and handed over to Cambridgeshire ACRE by 30 September 2023.

Please provide a summary of key milestones and completion dates covering the duration of the work.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The contract for this work will be managed by Howard Jones, New Life on the Old West Project Manager at Cambridgeshire ACRE.

The consultant will be expected to work closely with Cambridgeshire ACRE staff, key partners, and other consultants, providing quarterly update reports and attending meetings to provide an overview of the work as it progresses.

An inception meeting will be held at the start of the project to discuss the work and provide for the development of an agreed workplan to guide the work, timing and expectations. Please allow time for this meeting and development of a workplan in your costings.

At an early stage of the delivery phase, we will re-convene a project Steering Group – with biodiversity specialists from all relevant conservation, land and water management organisations involved. The consultant will be expected to work closely with all relevant partners, providing regular updates and attending meetings to provide an overview of the work as it progresses.

Cambridgeshire ACRE is fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Our Data Protection Policy (copy provided) sets out the measures with which all parties working on its behalf should comply. Any personal data shared by Cambridgeshire ACRE with the successful consultant must be handled in accordance with these measures.

The GDPR states that we should only contract with a processor who can provide sufficient guarantees that the requirements of the GDPR will be met and the rights of data subjects protected. The successful consultant will

therefore be asked to complete Cambridgeshire ACRE's 'Data Protection Third Party Processor Checklist' as a way of providing the necessary assurances.

BUDGET

The maximum value of this contract is £20,000, which must include all VAT and expenses you incur. Cambridgeshire ACRE cannot exceed this amount.

Please provide information on your daily rate, VAT and the number of days of time allocated to each of the specified tasks to be undertaken as part of the work.

PREPARATION OF TENDERS

Tenders are expected to cover the following:

- Relevant experience and competency possessed to complete the work.
- Biographies of any staff that will complete the work.
- Examples of similar work completed successfully elsewhere.
- The methods to be used for the development of each of the key tasks, taking into account any potential continued social distancing requirements due to Covid-19.
- Proposals for approaches to working with all relevant partners involved.
- A simple risk analysis of any issues or barriers foreseen in undertaking the work successfully.
- Full costs and expenses including information on daily rates, VAT and the amount of days of time allocated to each of the key specific tasks to be undertaken as part of the work.
- A breakdown of key milestones and their expected completion dates.
- Contact details of two people who are willing to provide references regarding similar work undertaken over the last 3 years.
- Public liability insurance details, covering the organisation and delivery of public facing community events.

SELECTION OF TENDERS

Cambridgeshire ACRE has a formal 'Policy on Choosing Consultants, Contractors and Suppliers' a copy of which is provided alongside this Invitation to Tender.

Cambridgeshire ACRE will set a scoring system to allow it to determine and select the best value for money tender, with a panel of both staff and trustees involved in this process, and staff from selected partners where

relevant or needed. Shortlisted consultants will be invited to an interview where a short presentation will be required detailing how the work will be undertaken.

SUBMISSION OF TENDERS

If you wish to discuss the requirements of the tender further, then please contact Howard Jones on tel: 01353 865030 or via email at, howard.jones@camsacre.org.uk

Please submit your tender (in MS Word or PDF format) by email to Alison Brown, Head of Business Services at Cambridgeshire ACRE, by 12noon on 23 April 2021 via alison.brown@camsacre.org.uk Late submissions will not be accepted.