



Northumberland
Wildlife Trust

Biodiversity Boost: A Journey to a Wilder Druridge

Evaluation Brief
Invitation to Tender



Biodiversity Boost: Journey to a Wilder Druridge

Contract Brief for the Evaluation of the Biodiversity Boost Project (2024-2026)

Project Background

Northumberland Wildlife Trust (NWT) has secured funding from Species Survival Fund, a partnership between Defra and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The project aims to restore habitats, improve biodiversity and enhance access for people at Northumberland Wildlife Trust (NWT) reserves within Druridge Bay (Hauxley, East Chevington and West Chevington), and provide facilities to watch and learn about native wildlife at Northumberland Zoo.

Project objectives are:

1. Reedbed restructuring at East Chevington. This will make it more attractive to species such as bittern as well as helping existing populations of species such as marsh harriers and bearded tits. Translocation of reed into the northwest corner will also extend the habitat area.
2. Woodland restructuring. Dense conifer plantations will be thinned and in places clear-felled to open up the canopy and promote natural regeneration of native woodland.
3. Species-rich grassland creation. There is the opportunity to revert poor-quality arable fields resulting from opencast restoration into species rich grassland. First by sowing grass to reduce nutrient levels, and then a species rich mix tailored to the soil conditions.
4. Watercourse realignment and wetland creation. Waterways will be reshaped to slow the flow of water, create wetland habitats and improve water quality from West Chevington to East Chevington.
5. Improved access. Existing rights of way, footpaths and bridlepaths will be re-opened or improved, allowing access by a greater range of users.
6. Fencing to enable extensive grazing. This will allow the use of grazing animals which will be used to maintain grassland habitats as well as the mosaic of scrub across West Chevington.
7. Control of Invasive Non-Native Species. Using technology to monitor grey squirrel and mink sightings and implement control across all project sites. This will help protect the coastal population of red squirrel and potentially make the Druridge Bay area suitable for the reintroduction of water voles.
8. Hide installations. The installation of new hides at Hauxley and Northumberland Zoo, with associated interpretation boards, will enhance the visitor experience at both of our hubs and showcase the

work we are doing to improve biodiversity and protect our native species.

9. Osprey pole. A significant proportion of English ospreys breed within Kielder Forest. To facilitate the expansion of the population, and following advice from experts, we intend to erect a breeding platform.
10. Create a project film. This film will be used to showcase the project and explain the need for practical action to target biodiversity loss.

The total budget for the Biodiversity Boost Project is in the region of £750,000 (including in kind donations). We have secured funding of £735,395.00 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The project began in May 2024.

Evaluation Scope

This contract brief is for a specialist organisation or individual to work with NWT staff to evaluate the Biodiversity Boost Project. This would include reviewing baseline data, setting up systems for ongoing monitoring, interpreting data and feedback, and producing an interim report, final report, series of case studies and a short evaluation film.

The project evaluation will measure success against the following agreed indicators set by the National Lottery Heritage Fund:

1. Heritage will be in a better condition - habitat will be created, restored or enhanced
2. Connecting people with nature – a wider range of people will be involved in the project
3. The local economy will be boosted

The Contract

This contract is for consultant services as specified below.

The contract will start in January 2025 and the final evaluation must be completed and presented before **28th February 2026**.

This contract will be managed on behalf of NWT by the Project Officer, Helen Walsh.

Contract Specification

The consultant will carry out a project evaluation which will include:

- Reviewing baseline data
- Agreeing how progress will be measured against the approved purposes and project objectives, following the Heritage Lottery Fund's [‘Evaluation good practice guidance’](#).
- Agreeing an evaluation timetable including regular meetings and site visits and timescales for interim and final reports.
- Supporting project staff and volunteers to collect appropriate feedback and monitoring data by providing a set of resources such as questionnaires and templates.
- Collating and interpreting all data collected over the project period
- Production of an interim report to inform the final stages of the project.

- Production of a final report, case studies, evaluation film and final presentation which summarises project strengths, successes and challenges and makes recommendations for the future
- Providing detailed feedback to project managers

The consultant will be required to provide regular updates to the Project Officer as well as attending in person meetings arranged as per the agreed delivery timetable. Excellent communication will be required at all times. Any delays in meeting the project deadlines should be reported promptly.

Responding to the Tender

Interested parties should email the project officer before midday on 20th December to request the '*Additional information & project delivery plan*' document prior to submitting their proposal.

The successful candidate should have:

- experience in completing evaluations for similar projects
- understanding of the Wildlife Trusts' mission and objectives
- experience writing clear and impactful reports and case studies for a variety of audiences, working flexibly and in close partnership with a commissioning organisation

When submitting your proposal, please provide:

- Your proposed approach including how you would work alongside the Northumberland Wildlife Trust and associated project partners.
- Project plan and budget, indicating the number of days allocated to each task. The budget should include all costs associated with delivery (fees, travel, other costs) and make clear daily rates.
- CVs of key delivery personnel, highlighting relevant qualifications and experience.
- Details of experience of undertaking similar work. Specifically, outline your knowledge and understanding of measuring outcomes, managing and analysing information, training others in self-evaluation and engaging communities and stakeholders.
- Information about your environmental policies and approach to mitigating environment impacts.
- Copies of the last three years' account and a statement that provides confidence that your organisation will be able to conduct the evaluation over the required period.
- The names and contact details for two independent referees.

Tender submissions should be kept to a maximum of 10 pages.

Available Resources

The maximum budget available is £16,500 inclusive of VAT. This sum must cover all fees and expenses associated with the delivery of the contract and set out the VAT.

Procurement Process

Completed proposals should be submitted to the Project Officer, Helen Walsh at helen.walsh@northwt.org.uk stating 'Biodiversity Boost Evaluation tender' in the subject line no later than midday on Wednesday 8th January 2025. Proposals will be assessed and if there is a need for interviews, these will take place on Friday 17th January 2025. Please address any questions to the Project Officer via email.

Scoring

The selection panel will use a scoring system to ensure objectivity. This will be weighted as follows:

- Methodology and approach – 40%.
- Skills, knowledge and experience – 30%
- Price / value for money – 30%