

EXTERNAL BIDS

Summary: To provide the Executive Committee with an update on current External Bids that the Board is involved in.

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the various updates.

Report by: James Webb – Partnerships and Fundraising Lead

EXTERNAL BIDS SUPPORTING NATURE

Severn Trent Water has recently launched its 'Great Big Nature Boost' programme, with the aim of improving biodiversity across 50,000 hectares within their region. We have successfully applied to be a Strategic Partner through the **Glorious Cotswolds Grasslands** (GCG) project. The three year partnership agreement will run from 01 April 2021–31 March 2024 and is worth approx. £40,000 per year (£120,000 total contract value). It will allow the team to restore 20 hectares of wildflower grassland each year. GCG is currently supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation; this new partnership demonstrates a big step forward towards sustainability beyond their funding, which ends in February 2022.

Lead: Anna Field, GCG Project Asst.

Contribution to core costs: 15% of contract value

- Update: the sites for 2021/22 have been agreed.

National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative: to enhance landscapes impacted on by National Grid's pylon lines. CNL does not develop the detailed proposals or deliver the projects but only we can submit applications so if we don't do this there will be no spend in the Cotswolds. Payments will be made annually to CNL in advance so there will be no negative impact on cash flow.

Lead: Simon Smith, Nature Recovery Lead

Contribution to core costs: None

- Update: Grant Offers received for three projects. We require acceptance of an equivalent grant offer from the delivery partners before accepting the offer from NG. Received for 1 & 3 so those grant offers from NG have been accepted. Awaiting to hear back from 2 before accepting that one too.
1. Cheltenham's Escarpment Grasslands; Landscape and habitat restoration at Leckhampton Hill and Ravensgate Common. Project value £246,900, bid ask £183,000
 2. West of Winchcombe Landscape Enhancements; dry stone walling across Nottingham Hill. Project value £255,780, bid ask £173,580
 3. Hampnett to Chedworth Boundary Restorations (dry stone walling) Project value £287,444, bid ask £199,999.

Restoration of the Bridgeman Landscape at Lodge Park.

- Update: Workshop on the new LEI window and funding round attended in February. Cotswolds equal first NL/AONB in terms of securing funds from this scheme. Project 2 cited as good practice for use of a film in the application. Expression of interest submitted 22 April 2021. Should hear response

within 4 weeks. If successful full application mid-summer for September panel & release of funds in February 2022. A project proposal was approved by the Executive Committee in May 2020.

Big Chalk: a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) & DEFRA towards Big Chalk, a project that aims to connect calcareous habitat across landscapes from the south coast to the top of the Cotswolds and Chilterns.

Lead: Simon Smith, Nature Recovery Lead

Contribution to core costs: unknown at this early stage

- Update: Partnership development is going well. First formal meeting of the Steering Group 11th May. Different partners leading on different elements including informal discussions with Drew Bennelick at NLHF. National nature recovery prospectus and “story map” both feature Big Chalk and will form part of a tripartite agreement between AONBs, National Parks and NE being launched at the end of May. Big Chalk is gaining traction nationally and locally with a lot of interest from partners at all levels. Proposal to NE for funding to build capacity and linked to the preparation of a NLHF EOI was very well received. Further details submitted following a meeting.

EXTERNAL BIDS SUPPORTING PEOPLE

BATHSCAPE Landscape Partnership: CNL is one of the delivery partners for the project, funded by NLHF, which will create recreational routes for a variety of audiences within the setting of Bath. Contract value just under £90,000. A Trails and Access Officer has been recruited to deliver the project starting on 1st June, supported by the Access and Volunteer Lead. Significant volunteer involvement expected.

Lead: Mark Connelly, Land Management Lead

Contribution to core costs: £25,000 to fund a Trails and Access Officer (1.5 days per week over 2.5 years) and £4,000 towards line management support.

- Update: Trails and Access Officer recruited
- Update: the main Circuit of Bath will be waymarked and safe for users by September 2021, in time for the Bathscape Walking Festival

Rural Skills & Young People: various proposals submitted/ in development that will provide nature based **education, training and skills for young people**. The project will utilise the existing rural skills resource and grow our engagement with young people.

Lead: James Webb, Partnerships and Fundraising Lead

Contribution to core costs: The aim is to get one day per week of Rural Skills Officer time, plus resource to cover activity/ material and transport costs.

- Update: application submitted to Thames Water in April towards activity/ material and transport costs. Application in development for salary costs for another funder(s).

Thames Water Smarter Catchment plan: potentially a multi-million pound investment by Thames Water in the Evenlode catchment. There are several strands to the plan, which primarily aims to improve water quality by targeting the farmed landscape. There is also

an education/ engagement aspect, which could involve employee(s) hosted by CNL. Mark Connelly and James Webb are on the conservation and engagement working groups respectively.

Indirect

National Trails: a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund to establish a new national body to support the local delivery of National Trails. The new national organisation may hold funds and employ a small team. Staffing implications for CNL should be limited to liaison on issues, which CTAP would be doing anyway.

Lead: Ed Macalister-Smith, Board Member

- Update: Jo Atkey has been appointed and has begun to work up proposals for a Trails organisation, for discussion and agreement by Trail Chairs. She has been in post c. 6 weeks.

MAY 2021