Green Space development
Invitation to Tender
Recreating a Great Place North Belfast

Project: Green Spaces Design and Implementation
Managing organisation: Belfast Charitable Society
Funding Body: National Lottery Heritage Fund and Belfast Charitable Society

Submission Deadline: Thursday 3rd December 12pm.

1. Introduction

Belfast Charitable Society, on behalf of the North Belfast Heritage Cluster (NHBC), wishes to appoint a suitably qualified company/consultant to develop and implement a programme of improvements to selected green spaces in North Belfast.

The commission will involve working with local partners and communities to develop practical, attractive and sustainable green-space interventions that improve the quality, accessibility, biodiversity and use of local spaces.

The appointed contractor will be expected to take projects from initial design through to implementation, working within the available budget and agreed programme with the development of low cost management and maintenance plan. This project will achieve an increase in and access to green space, lead to biodiversity net-gain and support species restoration. The latter two requirements can be informed by the Cluster's high-level ecology assessment of July 2026 which is included in this Invitation to Tender.

2. Background

The NBHC was established in 2017 to support fourteen heritage buildings and organisations to strengthen their assets, collaborate, and increase public value. In September 2023, the NBHC received funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the four-and-a-half-year delivery, under the next phase of the project entitled 'Recreating a Great Place North Belfast'. It is part funded by the Belfast Charitable Society. The project is delivered in partnership with the 13 other cluster members and their respective heritage buildings based across north Belfast:

- Belfast Cathedral Church of St Anne, Donegall Street
- Redeemer Central, Donegall Street
- St Patrick's School/ Belfast Jesuit Centre, Donegall Street
- St Patrick's Church, Donegall Street
- The Society of Friends Meeting House, Frederick Street
- Clifton House, North Queen Street
- Clifton Street Cemetery, Henry Place
- Belfast Orange Hall, Clifton Street
- Indian Community Centre, Clifton Street

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- St Malachy's College, Antrim Road
- 174 Trust/ Duncairn Arts and Culture Centre
- Carnegie Oldpark Library, Oldpark Road
- The North Club/ North Belfast Working Men's Club, Danube Street.

The project promotes heritage-led regeneration, community wealth building, and organisational resilience across north Belfast. A key objective is to improve the environmental sustainability and long-term financial viability of participating organisations and their historic buildings.

Cluster members include a diverse range of heritage, cultural, and community assets (e.g. Clifton House, Belfast Cathedral, Carnegie Oldpark Library), many of which operate from heritage buildings with their attendant planning restrictions. Across the Cluster, there will be a variety of green spaces in various states of usage and potential green spaces.

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3. Background to the managing organisation

Belfast Charitable Society (BCS) is the oldest charity in Belfast and has been in operation since 1752. The organisation was established to address poverty and disadvantage and continues to do so today.

- Belfast Charitable Society is governed by an Act of Parliament, the most recent version of which was passed in 1996 to ensure that the Society was "able to serve the present day and likely future needs of the community". This Act sets out the objects, powers, constitution and management of the Society.
- The Charity is registered with the Charity Commission for NI (NIC104998) and HM Revenue & Customs Charity No. XN45105. It is therefore regulated by the Commission. Audited Accounts must be prepared to meet its accounting requirements (SORP).
- The Society is housed at Clifton House, 2 North Queen Street Belfast which is a 'Grade A' Georgian building erected in 1774. The Society is led by a voluntary Board of Trustees, employs 10 staff and is supported by a diverse volunteer base.
- The Society undertakes grant-making and philanthropic activity and invests in other work and activities delivered by voluntary and community organisations who address social and economic disadvantage. It works with numerous organisations to profile philanthropy in Northern Ireland and help improve the sustainability of others to ultimately help those most in need.

4. Invitation

4.1. Summary

Belfast Charitable Society on behalf of the North Belfast Heritage Cluster wishes to appoint a suitably qualified company/consultant to:

- Develop designs and implement six agreed green space designs across members of the cluster with clear legacy management and maintenance plans
- Ensure designs increase green space, make biodiversity net-gain and support species restoration
- Develop green spaces that can support longer term ambition for delivery of a 'green spine' across the heritage Cluster
- Deliver green spaces that are manageable with the capacity of Cluster members
- Support the project's broader goals of improving sustainability, reducing reliance on external funding and enhancing resilience across the cluster

4.2. Detailed services required

The appointed contractor will be required to engage with relevant Cluster members and develop and implement agreed green-space improvements. The work will be informed by the high-level ecology survey completed in July 2026. Services will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Engagement with participating Cluster members to understand the use, condition, opportunities and constraints of selected green spaces including appropriate site visits.
- Development of designs for six agreed green spaces, taking account of biodiversity, species restoration, accessibility and the wider public realm. Any development should also pay attention to specific heritage constraints or ambitions.
- Ensure that the findings of the high-level ecology survey are supported.
- Implementation of the agreed designs within the available budget and programme.
- Consideration of the management, maintenance and long-term legacy of each green space, ensuring proposals are manageable for Cluster members and develop management and maintenance plans as per National Lottery expectations.
- Consideration of how individual spaces can contribute to the longer-term ambition for a green spine across the heritage Cluster.

4.3. Please note:

Documents produced must be clear, professionally presented and accessible, and suitable for use by Cluster members in planning, implementation, maintenance and future funding applications.

4.4. Health and safety

The bidder must comply with all applicable health and safety requirements.

5. Budget and payment

Applicants should provide a proposal that includes an indicative breakdown of all costs. Costs should be inclusive of VAT.

The payment schedule, based on the fee agreed, will be agreed at the project initiation meeting. A percentage of the fee may be made upon commencement, and a final payment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of the services.

6. Timescale

The submission deadline and project timescale are indicated below.

SUGGESTED

- Open tender – Thursday 12th November 2026
- Closure of ITT – Thursday 3rd December 2026
- Award tender – by Thursday 10th December
- Project Initiation meeting – Week beginning 17th December
- Completion of tender – End of September 2027

Bidders should confirm their availability to deliver the project within the agreed timeframe.

7. Format of the proposal

7.1. Your proposal document should include the following information:

Details of your firm

- The organisation and structure
- Key personnel and qualifications, including the key contact person for the project
- Overview of relevant experience and client base including examples of working with Community and Voluntary Sector or Heritage organisations on small scale projects
- Potential benefits to Belfast Charitable Society (BCS) and the Cluster of selecting your firm, including any value add-ons

Your Experience:

- Tender-related experience, including examples of previous relevant projects delivered and partnership working
- References from previous clients and/or organisations with whom you have delivered services in partnership

Your Approach

- Understanding of the project's requirements, opportunities and constraints
- Methodology for design and implementation, including biodiversity impacts, maintenance requirements and fit within the wider public realm to include an indicative plan of work
- Processes to address client satisfaction, suitability and quality assurance
- How you will report to BCS and the Cluster
- Cost

7.2. Please limit your response to 10 sides of A4. Cover sheets are not included in this page limit. Please use Arial 12 font with single line spacing. Appendices, if included, will not be scored other than where they relate to staff experience and qualifications.

8. Assessment

Submissions will be assessed based on:

Criterion	**Percentage of award**
Understanding requirements, methodology and approach	**20%**
Relevant experience	**30%**
Value for money	**30%**
Capacity to deliver within or ahead of the timeframe	**29%**
Total	**100%**

9. Award criteria

Belfast Charitable Society does not bind itself to accept the lowest stated price and will not compensate any proposer for costs associated with producing the quote.

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous quote overall based on an assessment of price, quality, delivery, technical ability, relevant experience and stated ability to satisfactorily meet the requirements of the contract.

10. Further information

If you require further information or clarification, please contact:

development@nbheritagecluster.org

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Bidders should be aware that answers provided to any substantive questions submitted will be shared with all other bidders.

11. Conflicts of interest

Bidders should confirm that they have no perceived conflicts of interest relating to the provision of this service for BCS.

12. Submission and closing date

Bids must be submitted electronically to: development@nbheritagecluster.orG

Deadline: Thursday 3rd December 2026 at 12pm.

Submissions after the closing date and time will not be accepted. Submissions must comply with the requirements set out above.

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