

Summary Open Competition - Swift 'Tower', art installation

Location: Pye Fen Local (LNR) Nature Reserve, Cambridge
Client: Cambridge City Council

The following provides information about the commission itself. If you are interested in making a formal Tender bid to undertake the commission, an Invitation to Tender document accompanies this project description. Only a completed Invitation to Tender submitted by the deadline of 12pm on September 7th 2010 can be considered as a bid for this commission.

If you would like to receive the Invitation to Tender, please contact:

**Emma Farrington
Business Support Co-ordinator
Policy and Projects
Cambridge City Council
Po Box 700
Cambridge
CB1 0JH**

**Email: Emma.Farrington@cambridge.gov.uk
Telephone: 01223 457161**

Cambridge City Council are creating a new extension to Logan's Meadow Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which is called Pye Fen. We wish to commission a 'Swift Tower' to be located within the Pye Fen extension. The 'Tower' will provide a key point of interest in the new natural green space and will be visible from the Riverside cycle bridge. The bridge offers an elevated viewing station of the new reserve and will allow unique eye level views of swifts entering the Tower. This is an exciting, creative opportunity for an artist who has relevant experience for a commission of this nature.

Swifts (*Apus apus*) spend almost all of their life in the air and can fly up to 20,000 feet high. They migrate to breed in Europe for three months in the summer and then return to Central and South Africa. The swift population is declining in the UK, partly as a result of the loss of nest sites through demolition, renovation and 'improvements' to buildings. A swift 'Tower' would provide an opportunity to establish a highly visible new colony within the City and raise awareness of the species, particularly to highlight, its unique international lifestyle and dependency on our built environment and natural green spaces. Having an accessible breeding colony may also provide the opportunity for future bird ringing, even satellite tracking of migrating individuals.

Swifts have a fascinating life history, travel vast distances and are superbly adapted to their aerial life style. These attributes would allow considerable scope for developing a unique structure to both celebrate and house our swifts. In addition, 2010 has been named 'International Year of Biodiversity' by the United Nations.

Cambridge City Council has pledged to support this initiative and the launch of this project during 2010 will realise this support. Swifts by their very nature are an international species.



This single commission will comprise of two stages.

Stage 1

The first stage of the commission will be to produce a permanent piece of work that will function as a 'Tower' for between 50 and 100 pairs of swifts to accommodate them after their epic migration from Africa. The artwork must be both 'fit for purpose' and raise awareness of the species both in terms of its incredible lifestyle and its declining population. The project offers a highly visible, thought provoking opportunity, to promote how international biodiversity can be incorporated into the local built environment.

A 'Tower' for swifts will require specification features that are essential to attract and accommodate them (e.g. Minimum height of 7 metres, weather proof, and a degree of insulation from excessive temperature. Cavity dimensions and entrance size and shape) but the materials and design are open to interpretation by the artist. The design will need to exclude opportunities for species such as Starlings and Feral Pigeons to avoid nest site competition with the swifts. However, careful design could also provide opportunities for House Martins, Pipestrelle and Noctule Bats, all of which are either protected species or of conservation concern.

In order to attract first year non-breeding Swifts to colonise the 'Tower', calls will be played via a loud speaker, from the installed 'Tower'. The power for this will be provided by photovoltaic cells or similar. The cost for this element of the commission must be included within the overall budget. The project will eventually evolve to include nest box webcams, which will linked to the Cambridge City LNR website. The design for the 'tower' will have to allow for this future element to be installed, once

the 'Tower' is colonised by the swifts but the cost of these webcams will not be taken from the budget for the artwork

The Pye Fen Local Nature Reserve is located close to the river Cam and within the floodplain and because of this, the design of the artwork must take into account the ground conditions of the site, which are affected by seasonal floodwater. Early discussions with the Environment Agency indicate that the footings will need to be at ground level, with all spoil removed from the floodplain. The main support for the tower must be designed to minimise the risk of capturing flood debris whilst withstanding the force of flood waters.

The artwork must be safe, robust and attractive and have a minimal pollution impact in both the immediate and wider vicinity. It must be designed, manufactured and installed using sustainable materials, processes and techniques wherever possible. Other design considerations include safety implications, vandal resistance, access for maintenance and also access for inspection of the bird boxes themselves.

The project would provide a national case study and have a visual impact that will emphasise the council's commitment to biodiversity, supporting our Countdown 2010 and beyond pledge (an international pledge to halting the loss of biodiversity) signed in June 2010 at the Biodiversity Fair, launching the Environment Festival. The BBC has also expressed an interest in promoting this project.

The commissioned artist will be required to:

- provide ideas for the creative interpretation of the project
- to provide proposals which are appropriate both to encourage swifts to inhabit the work and also for the ground conditions of the site
- develop ideas through a combination of research and consultation with the local community, the City Council's Public Art Panel and the Project Steering Group
- produce a final design for the work including providing all technical details and a maintenance plan, which are fully costed and achievable within the budget
- work with a structural engineer to demonstrate the design and construction is safe and appropriate for the ground conditions of the site
- attend all appropriate meetings and events linked to the project as required
- provide drawings etc. for planning permission and submit planning permission;
- obtain approvals from the Environment Agency
- inform the project manager about any issues that might impact on the timescale and installation of work
- supervise the fabrication and installation of the work and contract suppliers as necessary
- assist with the promotion and launch of the commission on completion
advise on material/ installation costs

The Appendices contained within the Invitation to Tender contain a site location map, photographs and also some useful links for research purposes.

Public Consultation

The artist is expected to consult with Swift Conservation, the local community, Council Officers and Elected Members during the concept design stages of this commission and to develop a public engagement plan as part of the project, which should include a public exhibition.

Overall budget

A budget of up to £30,000 is available for this part of the project. This budget is to include all fees, expenses, planning permission and approval costs, materials, fabrication, public consultation, transport, installation, sub-contractors costs, technical consulting advice (including structural engineering advice), specialist lighting, insurances and any other costs associated with the making or installation of the piece, including VAT. Artist Fees do not include VAT. A breakdown of budget details for this stage of the project will be approved by the project steering group. A final and non-revisable cost structure (as a separate document) will be required. Costs are to be provided inclusive of Vat and other charges, and covering all of the above.

The fee will be paid in three stages according to the artist's proposed programme of activity, outlined broadly as:

- First payment on completion of design concept
- Second payment on approval and acceptance by the City Council of the final costed design
- Third payment on delivery and installation of artwork

The completion of all work under Stage 1, including delivery/ handover to the Council shall be completed by **May 2011**.

Stage 2

The second stage will be the development and delivery of a temporary project to be located in Pye Fen Local Nature Reserve after the installation of the swift 'tower'. The project must celebrate the installation of the 'tower'. It must be a creative interpretation of the international lifestyle of the swift and raise awareness to the plight of the species. The artist will be required to work with young people from the surrounding community (which will be facilitated by the City Council's Children's and Young Peoples Team (CHYPS)) to develop and deliver the temporary art project. This stage of the project could link to school curriculum themes or perhaps investigate links with schools on the swift's migrant route and African wintering grounds. This stage will result in a final project taking place or being installed in the Reserve during **June 2011**.

The artist will be required:

- to work with young people in the surrounding community, and in partnership with the City Council's CHYPS Team

- to provide proposals which are fully costed and achievable, within the budget, and, which outline how and when the local young people will be engaged and also specify how the work will be fabricated and unveiled / performed etc (where applicable)
- apply for any necessary approvals and permissions (if applicable)
- to supply the City Council with images and any other information required for the purposes of promotion and publicity of the project

Budget for Stage 2

A budget of up to £4,500 is available for the temporary project. This budget includes all artist fees for engagement with young people in the local community, research and development, installation of an artwork, plus materials and fabrication costs (where applicable) or any costs associated with the project to be delivered in the Local Nature Reserve, including VAT. A breakdown of budget details for this stage of the project will be approved by the project steering group, once the outline of the proposal has been developed by the commissioned artist. A final and non-revisable cost structure (as a separate document) will be required. Costs are to be provided inclusive of Vat and other charges, and covering all of the above.

Insurance

Public Liability Insurance up to a value of 5 million Pounds will need to be provided.

Timescale 12pm on 7th September 2010 for receiving expressions of interest, including submission of the information detailed below (non indicative)

- Artist Shortlisting: 14th September 2010 (indicative)
- Interviews: 20th September 2010 (indicative)
- Provisional Award: 21st September 2010 (indicative)
- Contract Award: End of September 2010 (indicative)
- Permanent artwork to be completed and installed by May 2011 (**non indicative**)
- Temporary Project completed June 2011 (**non indicative**)

Deadline of 12pm on September 7th 2010 for receiving expressions of interest, which must include the following:

- A written document (Word format) of a maximum 700 words, outlining their initial response to the brief; including their understanding and appreciation towards the brief, the subject, the technical specifications (including structural issues) required for the ground conditions of the site; and their proposed approach to public consultation, research and development including the apportionment of fees allocated for each stage of the commission.
- A copy of their current curriculum vitae highlighting relevant qualifications and experience for a commission of this nature, particularly information about any recent exhibitions and/or commissions.
- Visuals of up to 6 pieces of appropriate recent work should be provided in **Jpeg/JPG** format. Moving images may be provided if appropriate and should

be viewable on a PC using Microsoft Media Player. All visuals must be of good quality, high resolution and sharply focused.

- A 200 word artist statement that gives an explanation of their practice and work to support the visuals.
- The contact details of two referees for work completed within the last 3 years.

All Tender submissions will be evaluated upon the criteria and 'weightings' contained within the Invitation to Tender. The criteria has been developed to demonstrate the artist's track record in delivering collaborative projects in the public realm and the suitability of their practice to the Swift Tower commission. The five artist's, who score the highest will be invited to attend an interview, where they will be asked to give a presentation of their past work to the Project Steering Group. The presentation should also explain their initial response to the site and the commission, and demonstrate how the artist's own arts practice is appropriate for this commission. The Project Steering group will evaluate each presentation using the same criteria and weightings (outlined in Sections 3 and 11 of the Invitation to Tender document) and adjust previous scores, accordingly. We are not asking for proposals at this stage but a discussion about how past work relates to the opportunity at this site and an initial response to what your approach to this commission might be. Each short-listed artist will have 45 minutes to undertake the presentation and to answer questions.

Contract

The conditions of contract that will apply to any contract resulting from this tender are contained within Section 7 of the Invitation to tender.

Management

The commission will be overseen by a project group, which will comprise of the City Council's Nature Conservation Officer, Senior Arts and Urban Design Officer, experts from Swift Conservation, and elected Members.

This group will be involved in short listing, making the final selection of the artist, and overseeing the implementation of the commission.