

# Pebblebed Heaths Visitor Mitigation Development of Educational Resources Contract Brief

## Background

The East Devon Pebblebed Heaths (Pebblebed Heaths) cover some 1,400 ha and make up the largest block of lowland heath in Devon. The majority of the heaths are designated SSSI, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) due to the rarity of the habitats and the species they protect. The Pebblebed Heaths are also registered commons and as such are Open Access Land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Most of the designated area (ca. 80%) is owned by Clinton Devon Estates (CDE) and managed by the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust (PHCT), which manages the site for the benefit of wildlife and to promote the public enjoyment and appreciation of the reserve. Some smaller areas are leased or owned by the RSPB, with remaining areas privately owned and managed, including by the Devon Wildlife Trust.

Under the current Local Plan over 40,000 new homes are planned in the in the East Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge districts through to 2030. This level of growth has implications for all popular recreation sites, with significant increases in visitor pressure expected. However, there are specific requirements for protecting European conservation sites within the National Planning Policy Framework, which includes designated SPAs and SACs. Within the local area this includes the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, Dawlish Warren and the Exe Estuary. The Habitats Regulations translate European legislation set out within the Habitats and the Birds Directives and there are specific legal obligations to ensure that local development avoids deterioration of habitats and species for European sites. In south-east Devon the strategic approach to deal with issues related to access and the impacts of increased recreation from planned development are set out in the South-east Devon European Site Mitigation Strategy (SEDESMS) (Liley *et al.* 2014b), with its implementation overseen by the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership (SEDHRP).

Under the auspices of this strategy the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Visitor Management Plan (Liley *et al.* 2016) was commissioned to provide a framework for delivery of mitigation for the Pebblebed Heaths to ensure they can cope with the increased levels of recreation in the future, and to give confidence that the expected growth will not result in adverse impacts on designated features. The report makes a series of recommendations for the long-term management of access, focusing on influencing visitors' behaviour and ensuring the site is more robust in terms of its ability to absorb recreation pressure. SEDHRP developed a five-year plan based on these recommendations and since 2017 priority actions have been delivered in line with this plan.

## Education

The Visitor Management Plan highlights educational work with schools as a priority measure that can be effective in mitigation by influencing on-site behaviour. This activity would involve visits to local schools, site visits with groups from local schools and educational resources made available to local schools on the internet. Such work would raise awareness with children as to the importance of the Pebblebeds, and how to behave on the heaths. It should aim to reach the wider community (parents and grandparents) as well as the children themselves. There is already a countryside learning officer employed by CDE who undertakes educational visits assisted by the PHCT site team, with similar work also undertaken by the Devon Wildlife Trust and the RSPB.

## Project Brief & Output

The objective of this contract (Feb.-March 2019) is to collate and formalise all existing educational resources available on the Pebblebed Heaths, and to adapt/develop new ones that support the mitigation objectives as outlined under the SEDESMS that are curriculum-focused. A critical component is promoting key messages related to responsible enjoyment of this special site.

- Resources suitable for supporting in-class, on site and post visit activities for KS1/2, including mixed age classes. Resources to be thematic and broad making curriculum links (plants/animals/local history/habitats/classification/environmental change/population growth/rocks and soils etc.) and if possible reflect a range of subjects (Science, Geography, History, English, Art etc) but to always have links to visitor impact and behaviour. Final scope to be determined after consultation with stakeholders
- Resources to be available to print and use digitally, available for download from an existing website
- Contract also to scope and cost (but not deliver) the creation of future additional supporting materials for educational visits.
- Work to be undertaken Feb.- April 2019
- Proposed budget (excluding VAT) £2500 for educational resources development contract, £2000 budget for artwork creation for packs, £500 budget for amendments to website to host resources.

## Key Stakeholders

The following organisations and individuals are considered to be key stakeholders who should be consulted during the work.

- Clinton Devon Estates (Kate Ponting, Kim Strawbridge, Sam Bridgewater, Charlotte Hodgson)
- RSPB (Toby Taylor)

- DWT (Pete Andrews)
- EDDC (Neil Harris, Tim Dafforn, Sama Euridge, Amelia Davies)
- DCC (Cressida Whitton)
- Local teachers to be identified

The work will be overseen by the Habitat Regulations Delivery Manager and the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Site Manger with educational expertise provided by the CDE Countryside Learning Officer. The successful tendering organisation/individual will be required to meet with these staff to agree on the work to be undertaken. A draft of the resources will go to the Habitat Regulations Officer Working Group for comment before final sign off.

**Key deadlines:**

Tender deadline: 9am 1st Feb 2019  
Confirm preferred consultant: 8<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2019  
Deadline for draft resources: end March 2019  
Deadline for final resources: end April 2019

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