Brief for Production of a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Highbury Park

The Protocol Group that coordinates the management of Highbury Park is seeking a consultant to manage the process and produce a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for Highbury Park.

Contract type	Freelance contract
Location	Highbury Park, South Birmingham
Budget	Up to £10,000 exclusive of any applicable VAT
Anticipated contract start & end date	September 2026-March 2027
Closing date	Friday 17 July 2026

1. About the Protocol Group

The Highbury Park Protocol Group is an informal partnership established in 2017 including the freeholder Birmingham City Council and the community groups that have taken responsibility for the care of land within the park. The Council and the community groups are committed to protect the special characteristics and features of the park which have been designated for their heritage and ecological value. The Protocol Group grew from a recognition that a mechanism was needed to coordinate activities across the Park.

The Protocol Group members include:

- Chamberlain Highbury Trust (currently coordinates the Protocol Group)
- Highbury Park Friends
- Highbury Orchard Community
- Birmingham & District Bee-keepers Association
- Four Seasons Garden Project
- Let's Grow Together/Fruit and Nut Village
- Sustainable Life
- Birmingham Parks Service

The Protocol Group usually meets on a quarterly basis.

2. About Highbury Park

Nestled just 4 miles from the heart of Birmingham on the border of Moseley and Kings Heath, Highbury Park is a tranquil oasis within the city.

Stretching out below Highbury Hall, the park spans over 100 acres of calm and beautiful public park in the heart of south Birmingham. The park offers a mix of open meadows, woodland areas, and landscaped gardens.

Spanning over 30 acres, the landscaped grounds adjacent to Highbury Hall were an impressive example of Victorian landscape design, combining elegance, innovation, and practical purpose, a reflection of the spirit of Joseph Chamberlain, the civic reformer who once called Highbury home.

Much of the grounds were designed by the landscape architect Edward Milner, combining pleasure gardens, a productive kitchen garden and glass houses, a hobby farm and ornamental lakes. These were later added to with themed gardens.

Highbury Park now extends far beyond the immediate grounds of Highbury Hall, offering a rich tapestry of meadows, woodlands, and open parkland that has evolved over more than a millennium. With evidence of Iron Age settlement and medieval ridge and furrow this landscape is steeped in history. From farmland enclosed by ancient hedgerows, the area has gradually transformed to adapt to new uses and changing needs.

The whole park is rich in wildlife, featuring ancient trees, wildflower meadows, and ponds that support diverse bird and insect species. Popular with walkers, joggers, and families, it provides scenic trails, play areas, and peaceful picnic spots. Highbury Park remains an important green space, blending natural beauty with historical significance and community recreation in the heart of Birmingham.

Today the whole park is Grade II listed for its historic importance and treasured for its landscape of meadows, woodland and wildlife. In recent times the historic landscape associated with Highbury Hall has fallen into decline, and the whole park is recognised as ‘At Risk’, making restoration and ongoing conservation vital to its future. The biodiversity in the wider park has increased in the last forty years resulting in its recommendation of Site of regional and local Importance for Nature Conservation.

The Park is much-loved and at the last count received over 500,000 visits a year.

Please see Appendix 1 for an indication of character areas within the Park

3. Current status of management and maintenance planning in the park

In 2021, CHT led a first phase of restoration works in Highbury Hall’s gardens which were completed in 2022 with c. £300,000 of funds from the Heritage Fund, Historic

England, the Highbury Trust and a private donor. This led to the production of a draft whole-park Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan which was updated in June 2025.

CHT, with the support of the Protocol Group, is currently undertaking a 3 year (2025-2028) £2.3m gardens restoration project, also focused on the 33 acres of the historic estate grounds, funded by the Heritage Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation and Historic England. Funding is towards:

- unifying path network
- reinstating the Italian Garden
- restoring pond edging and planting
- creating clear views and improved sight lines
- managing drainage and water bodies
- recreating historic planting
- a wide-ranging activity plan including supported volunteering opportunities, youth leadership programme and site wide events

To support this capital investment a fully costed Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan was prepared by Plincke Landscape Architects in August 2023 focused on the 33 acres of the core historic grounds of Highbury Hall. CHT's freelance Head Gardener undertook a review of the tasks and costing schedules of that Plan in Autumn 2025. The intention is that the freelance Head Gardener will produce a simplified version of the August 2023 Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan after the capital works are completed (currently scheduled for Spring 2027). Elements of this will be included in the LMMP for the whole park.

4. **Scope of services**

The brief is to work closely with the Protocol group to manage the process and produce a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan for the whole park.

The specific requirements of the brief include:

- Review the existing whole-park Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan and the historic estate focused Landscape Management.
- Establish with the Protocol Group ways of working and means of communication to manage the process of producing a 10-year Management and Maintenance Plan for the whole park by March 2027.
- Agree with the Protocol Group a clear structure and content format for the Plan, working from the current template and ensuring a focus on the document as a practical, workable guide to interventions and their purpose.
- Agree with CHT's Head Gardener alignment of the whole park Plan with that which will be updated for the historic estate in March 2027.

- During the process of production to make best productive use of relevant information contained within both extant Landscape Management and Maintenance Plans and the Local Sites Assessment (2021).
- Manage and facilitate a series of up to 6 meetings of the Protocol Group to draw together the whole-park Plan, undertaking an open co-creation process to ensure buy-in from each member.
- As part of the above, ensure that each Protocol Group member is enabled to articulate their individual organisational priorities for management of their elements of the wider park as well as synergies with others.
- Ensure that the balance of conservation priorities and management tasks in the Plan fully recognises and relates to the specific qualities of the wider park, where the balance between ecological, natural, landscape and historic features is different from the historic estate.
- Advise the Protocol Group on best value actions which each member can contribute and sources of funding to deliver them. Include these within the Plan.
- Produce the Plan to the previous agreed structure and content including costed management schedules/action plan.
- Consult with Protocol Group on draft Plan, seek recommendations for edits and changes and revise.
- Allow for up to 3 presentations of the final plan to the wider membership of the Protocol Group and other external stakeholders.

5. Fee, timeline and accountability

There is a fee of up to £10,000 available for this commission, exclusive of VAT but inclusive of VAT if you or your company are VAT registered.

We anticipate that this commission will take up to 6 months from September 2026-March 2027, but the end date is flexible.

We are open to suggestions as to how your time be split, and where and when efforts should be directed to achieve the target in a timely manner.

This commission is being funded by a contribution of Section 106 funds held by Birmingham City Council. The contract will be between the consultancy and the Chamberlain Highbury Trust.

The consultancy will be accountable to the Protocol Group, which is currently Chaired by CHT.

6. Skills, experience and knowledge

The Protocol Group is looking for:

Skills

- Excellent relationship building skills and proven ability to establish constructive working relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Ability to consider in the round the management needs of a wide range of park qualities including landscape planning and management, horticulture and arboriculture management, habitat and biodiversity management, soil management and irrigation planning, and conservation and restoration techniques.
- Ability to consider long-term management planning in the context of a number of contributing partners with varying budgets and resource allocations
- Excellent report writing and documentation which avoids jargon and can be readily understood by non-experts.
- Excellent project management skills to drive the process to a successful conclusion.

Experience

- Production of Landscape Management and Maintenance Plans for a historic landscape with public access
- Developing costed maintenance schedules
- Planning for landscape enhancement, restoration of historic features, biodiversity, habitat restoration, managing protected species, tree and turf maintenance and seasonal operations
- Experience of planning for a wide range of distinct character areas with various qualities
- Managing a diverse set of contributing partners, including voluntary organisations towards a common goal

Knowledge

- Best practices approaches to developing Landscape Management and Maintenance Plans
- Understanding of UK heritage and conservation law, environmental legislation, Health & safety regulations, and planning policy
- Knowledge of historic landscape character areas, native species and biodiversity, climate change impacts, sustainable maintenance, water and organic waste management.

- Knowledge of the current budgetary constraints under which local authority parks services are operating
- Green Flag Award criteria
- Monitoring frameworks for updated and tracking progress with resultant Plan
- Best value for money approaches to implementing the resultant Plan

7. How to apply

We are seeking applications by email by close of play Friday 17 July, to be sent to CHT's administrator by email to Emma.CHT@outlook.com.

Proposal requirement

The Protocol Group requires all those that wish to quote to submit a proposal to carry out this project that covers the following:

- approach to the project
- a methodology that meets the brief
- CVs of all personnel who will deliver the services
- experience and track record of similar projects
- two client referees
- timescale for the project.
- a fixed fee showing your daily rate, number of days spent on each task and including all fees and expenses
- details of Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance
- two referees from recent projects
- the methods you use for formal and informal communication with the client
- Fee (fixed lump sum) for this work inclusive of expenses but exclusive of VAT

The Protocol Group is likely to undertake clarification interviews with shortlisted tenderers. Dates will be notified.

8. Any questions?

If you have any questions prior to the application deadline, please contact us by email to HeadGardener.CHT@outlook.com.

9. Award criteria

The Protocol Group does not bind itself to accept the lowest of any tender. Should the Protocol Group wish to award a contract it will be awarded on the basis of who offered the best value taking due account of the award criteria set out in the table below. Tenders will be assessed against the following:

No.	Contract Award Criteria Question	Weighting
1	Price	30%
2	Demonstrable experience of producing Landscape Management and Maintenance Plans	50%
3	Approach to the project	10%
4	Methodology	10%

10. **Assessment**

The weighted price and quality scores for each tender will be added to produce a combined weighted score. The scores for each tender will be compared to determine which tender has the highest combined weighted score. The tender with the highest combined score will be deemed as offering the most economically advantageous tender and recommended for acceptance.

11. **Compliant tenders**

The Protocol Group requires all tenderers to submit a compliant tender that must satisfy all requirements of this Invitation to Tender.

12. **Validity**

All tenders shall constitute offers and shall remain valid for a period of 2 months from their submission date. Submission of a tender assumes acceptance of this requirement.

13. **Costs**

Tenderers will be responsible for all of their own costs in relation to negotiating and submitting a tender.

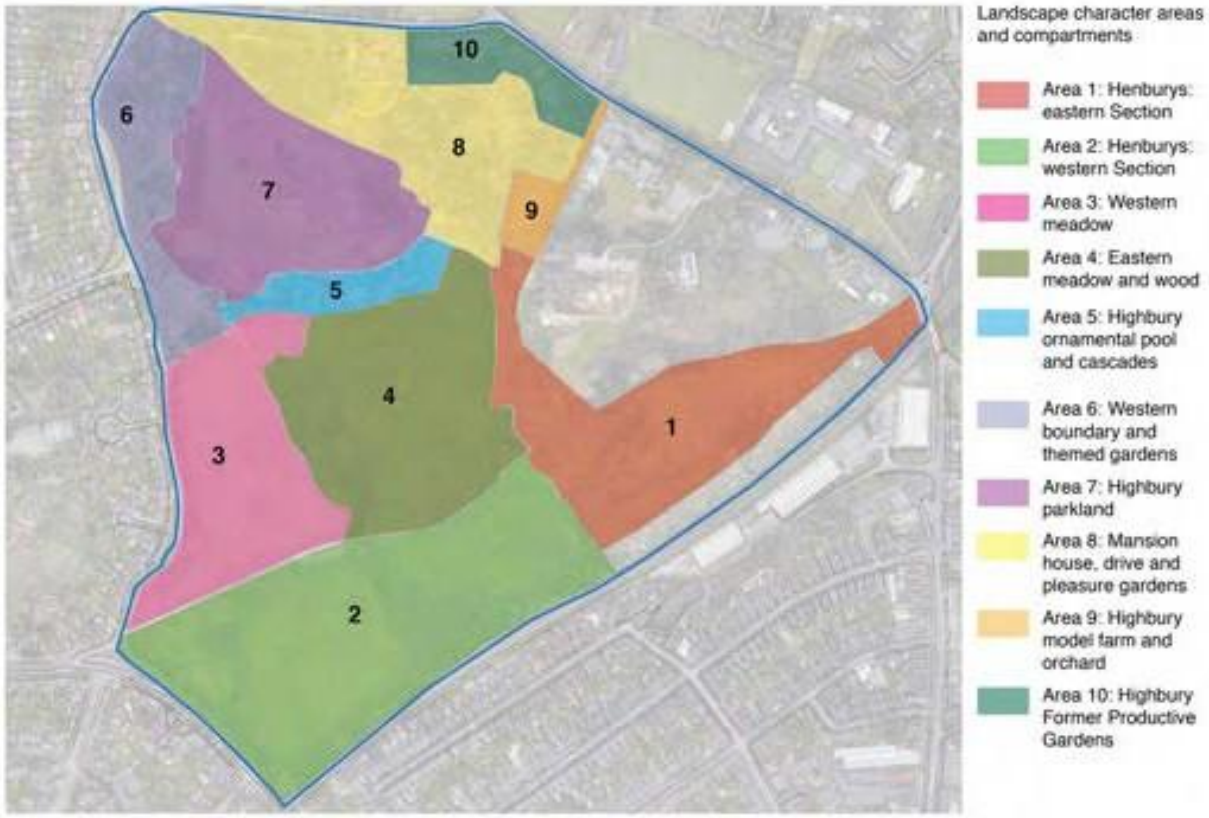
14. **Confidentiality**

This Invitation to Tender and associated information made available by the Protocol Group is done so on condition it is treated as confidential by the tenderer and its advisors, ensuring it is not copied, reproduced, or used other than as envisaged to permit a tender to be formulated. The information that the tenderer considers as confidential information should be clearly marked as such in the tender or where it is

provided in advance of the tender at the time of provision.

15. Further information

The Protocol Group can make available upon request:

- Draft whole-park Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (2021) updated June 2025.
- Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan by Plincke Landscape Architects (August 2023).
- Reviewed tasks and costing schedules of above Plan by CHT's freelance Head Gardener (November 2025).

Appendix 1: HIGHBURY PARK LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS