

PLYM VALLEY AND SALTRAM HERITAGE TRAIL

Artist Brief



I. Introduction

I.1 Plymouth Natural Networks

Plymouth aims to become: -

“one of Europe’s finest and most vibrant waterfront cities over the next 15-20 years”
(Plymouth Local Development Framework, Core Strategy)

To achieve this the city aims to increase its population to 300,000 from the current 241,000 to become the main sub-regional centre in the far South West. This vision also seeks to create: -

“high quality sustainable linked communities”

This will be supported by the Plymouth Natural Networks project, which will deliver new “green” infrastructure in the east and north of the city, which are the areas where significant growth is identified. This project will develop links between Dartmoor National Park to the north of the city via the Plym Valley to Saltram Estate and Plymouth Sound to the south. This will provide new and improved recreational opportunities, support sustainable new development and offer a higher quality of life for new and existing residents.

2. Plym Valley & Saltram Countryside Park Heritage Trail

2.1 Background

A Heritage Trail will form a key component of the Plymouth Natural Networks Programme. We envisage that the trail project will help to animate, provide legibility and added interest to the new and improved routes planned throughout the area. It will need to highlight and interpret the area’s character, history and natural environment in a unique manner. The development of the trail must involve local people to generate increased use and ownership. There will be a phased approach to the Heritage Trail with the works outlined in this brief being a first phase, which may be extended at a later date subject to funding and performance. We are currently working towards a £3million Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the Plymouth Natural Networks Project under their Landscape Partnerships Programme in June 2013, which may well lead to a Phase 3 from 2015 onwards.

The Saltram Countryside Park Masterplan, completed by Land Use Consultants in May 2011, identifies the need to enhance legibility and connectivity throughout the study area. In particular it highlights Marsh Mills and The Ride as key projects that now form essential components of this brief. The strap line vision for the Saltram Countryside Park is identified as:

“Bringing the best of the countryside in to the city”.

The full masterplan and topic papers can be viewed on the following web link: -

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/natureconservation/natureprojects/greeninfrastructureproject/saltrammasterplan.htm>

2.2 Artwork

We now seek suitably qualified artist(s) or designer(s) to help us develop and deliver our aspirations for the Heritage Trail.

Plymouth City Council aspires to use the work of artists to;

- Build on the city’s unique environmental qualities and assets
- Ensure community ownership
- Capitalise on historic strengths
- Provide community benefit
- Link key sites through the creation of a legible Heritage Trail

3. Location

The proposed Trail is shown on the accompanying plan.

The Trail will connect the Plym Valley with Marsh Mills, Saltram Estate with Plympton and Saltram Estate with Plymstock alongside existing, improved access routes that will be re-modelled through another project.

The following are key routes/areas on the proposed Trail;

3.1.1 Saltram Estate

Saltram is home to a Grade I listed historic Georgian house that was an adaptation of an original Tudor mansion within the grounds of a historic registered park and garden. Saltram is located to the east of Plymouth adjacent to the River Plym owned and operated by the National Trust and already the focus for significant recreational pressures. Our work seeks to improve sustainable access via walking and cycling to Saltram from surrounding communities and to develop alternative recreational opportunities to help divert some pressure away from the sensitive historic landscape.

The historic landscape and house contains a wealth of imagery available to the successful artist although the setting also provide constraints in terms of the need to ensure that any features respect the built and natural historic character.

Further information is available on the following website www.nationaltrust.org.uk/saltram/

3.1.2 Marsh Mills

Marsh Mills is currently the focal point in the Plym Valley/Saltram Countryside Park area, since it provides the point at which the Plym Valley and Saltram are connected to existing communities to the north and west of the area.

Its current condition belies this strategic importance with the A38 flyover, main railway line and a mix of retail, utility, light industrial and sports facilities juxtaposed throughout the area. The Saltram Countryside Park Masterplan identifies the area as a current barrier but also as an opportunity for a key, short-term project that will improve connectivity and use of the area.

Whilst existing connections are in place throughout the Marsh Mills area, these routes are currently waterlogged and heavily overgrown making use limited and difficult for all but the hardiest walkers. With our plans to upgrade these routes for pedestrians and cyclists, alongside other environmental improvements to existing stark watercourses and green areas, there are many opportunities available here for the artist(s) to create stopping/rest points for pedestrians and cyclists, way finders, interpretation points and other features to help create legibility, interest and an experience in the journey of the pedestrian whether this be to Saltram or the Plym Valley and the gateway to Dartmoor..

A wealth of historic material exists to act as inspiration for this area since it formed the point where several railway lines, tramways and packhorse routes converged on their approach to the city from the east and from the moors. There are also interesting wildlife features that could be highlighted including bats, kingfishers and salmon.

3.1.3 Plym Valley

The Plym Valley trail is the route of a former railway line between Plymouth and Tavistock that now forms part of the Sustrans National Cycle Route NR27 that connects the city with the Dartmoor National Park and ultimately the North Devon Coast. The route follows a very diverse landscape from the urban setting of Marsh Mills passing the 1.5 mile Plym Valley Heritage Railway near its source then travels through the ancient oak woodlands and popular meadows which is Plymbridge Woods. Cann Quarry provides a wonderful backdrop to the journey, where the Plym Peregrines nest and up above is the Cann Woods Nature Reserve. The route continues as a gentle climb in to the National Park .

Further information can be found on the following websites: -

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/local-to-you/south-west/view-page/item591855/
<http://www.plymrail.co.uk/>

Phase 2 The Ride

The Ride forms an existing route between Plymstock and Saltram alongside the River Plym and the restored Chelson Meadow refuse tip. In its current form it is monotonous and the opportunity exists for the Heritage Trail to address this and create stopping points overlooking the Plym on the approach to Saltram alongside our proposals to create an improved route closer to the River's edge.

This aspect of the work does not form part of the existing brief nor the budget, but the successful artist needs to be mindful of a possible extension in autumn 2013.

4. Artist Opportunity, Constraints and Outcome

4.1 Opportunity

Artists, Designers, a group or an organisation of practitioners are invited to submit ideas using any number of creative and material approaches to the entire Heritage Trail. We are looking for imaginative, eye-catching and creative solutions that will: -

- Highlight gateways in to the area
- Tell the story of the area's heritage, wildlife and industrial past
- Consider the potential of digital technology including the use of smart phone applications and downloadable activities.
- Offer functional as well as artistic solutions to installations
- Make the area more welcoming and interesting
- Lead people on a spiritual journey through the area

4.2 Constraints

4.2.1 Materials

Artworks or designs should be fabricated from durable low-maintenance materials with a minimum lifespan of twenty years. You must demonstrate how your chosen material(s) mitigate or incorporate weathering, normal wear and tear and acceptable deterioration. Examples of intentional and acceptable deterioration could include wood types intended to weather and change colours, or Core Ten steel.

Consideration needs to be given towards the use of sustainable materials given our vision and project ethos. The materials must also work sympathetically with the environments in which they are to be installed.

4.2.1.1 Vandalism

We seek a balance between materials considered for their ability to withstand intentional assault, and acceptance that potential vandalism should not be the overriding determinant when selecting materials.

4.2.1.2 Maintenance

Any on-going running costs or maintenance costs must be indicated in the response to brief.

4.2.1.3 Health & Safety

We seek a balance between allowing the public to use their common sense and discretion when exploring the work(s), without sanctioning an obvious or unintentional health and safety hazard.

4.2.1.4 Audit Documentation

Fabricators (whether the artist(s)/designer(s) or a sub-contracted third party) must provide:-

- Supplier documentation of material(s). For example. Stainless steel is available in several grades, and surface finish of lower grades can suffer from surface corrosion.

- Evidence of waste management and sustainable sourcing guidelines for your practice

5. Project Value

The total value of the Heritage Trail project is in the region of £45,000-£50,000. The Commissioning Panel may decide to select one artist or designer to deliver the entire Heritage Trail Project or may select several from the short list to deliver specific pieces of work along the Heritage Trail.

With this in mind, candidates who are short listed must prepare their response and budget based on whether they wish to create all or part of the Heritage Trail.

This project amount is all-inclusive and will cover:-

- artist(s)/designer(s) fees and travel not to exceed 15% of the overall project value or portion thereof
- materials, fabrication, transportation, installation costs associated with the artist(s)/designer(s) development of Community Benefit and engagement (see 6.3.1.)

6. Selection Process

6.1 Method

Commissioning will be by way of a two stage submission.

The commissioning group will select a shortlist from an advertised call. Expressions of interest are due no later than **1700 hrs Monday 24 September 2012.**

Shortlisted candidates will be notified on or before **Friday 5 October 2012.** Shortlisted candidates will be paid a fee of £500 plus travel expenses (not to exceed £100) to develop their Expression of Interest into a site-specific proposal to present at interview. Candidates will be invited to attend a non-mandatory group site visit in September. Interviews will be held on **Wednesday 7 November 2012,** after which a decision will be announced immediately and the artist invited to commence work straight away.

6.1.1 Stage I: Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest may be posted or emailed.

6.1.2 Postal submissions: mandatory

- Cover letter not to exceed 1,000 words (one thousand words) to include one previous work case study with methodology, materials and timeframe;
- Ten or fewer images of existing work as jpgs or tiffs on disc; colour photocopies or prints. Please indicate if these need to be returned and enclose a self addressed envelope.

- In lieu of sending images, candidates who have a personal website or dedicated pages on a group site may substitute the web address for images. If you choose this option, please clearly indicate you have done so, and ensure you indicate the full web address in your cover letter.
- CV not to exceed 2 sides A4
- Outline of concept for proposed artwork and indication of budget (max 1000 words)
- The envelope must clearly state: **Submission: Plym Valley & Saltram Countryside Park Heritage Trail**

6.1.3 Email submissions: mandatory

- Cover email not to exceed 1.000 words (one thousand words) to include one brief case study with methodology, materials and timeframe.
- Ten or fewer images of existing work as jpgs, tiffs or PDF.
- In lieu of sending images, candidates who have a personal website or dedicated pages on a group site may substitute the web address for images. If you choose this option, please clearly indicate you have done so, and ensure you indicate the full web address in your email.
- Email subject line must state: **Submission: Plym Valley & Saltram Countryside Park Heritage Trail**
- CV not to exceed 2 sides A4.
- Outline of concept for proposed artwork and budget (max 1000 words)

6.2 Evaluation

Submissions will be evaluated by the Commissioning Panel looking at the following criteria:

- Quality of work
- Concept, artistic merit and distinctiveness of proposed artwork
- Experience of project management including managing budgets and deadlines.

6.3 Stage 2: Interview

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to develop a site-specific proposal which will include visual representation of the proposed artwork, technical details including construction, materials, timescale and maintenance and a detailed itemised budget.

Interviews will be held in Plymouth at a location to be announced. Candidates will present to the Commissioning Panel with 20 minutes for their presentation and 20 minutes questions and answers. The Commissioning Panel will include our Public Art Officer, the client, Project Manager and representatives of our key stakeholders.

6.3.1 Site-specific proposals

Proposals presented at interview will be evaluated on:

- Concept
- Innovation
- Feasibility
- Cost / value for money
- Maintenance
- Timeframe
- Public access

- Community Benefit
 - i.e. how the artist will include a member or members of the local community in the realisation of the design/artwork. There is no mandatory approach, but artists could consider mentoring a local student; allowing student(s) to shadow the artist during installation; presenting a public talk/lecture or schools talk.
- Community Consultation
 - We seek an artist or artists(s) with experience in community consultation and participation in developing their work.

7. Timeframe

Research and development must begin immediately on selection of the artist(s)/designer(s). Three Progress meetings will be held with the Commissioning Panel on dates to be agreed. A Public Exhibition will be held approximately midway through the process on a date to be announced on the draft proposals prior to fabrication commencing. Installation and completion of the Heritage Trail will be on or before July 2013.

8. Contact Details and Further Information

Expressions of interest via post or email to the attention of:

Chris Coldwell
Senior Project Manager
Capital Delivery Team
Transport & Infrastructure
Directorate of Place
Plymouth City Council
Civic Centre
Armada Way
Plymouth PL1 2AA
Tel. (01752) 305602
Fax (01752) 304922
E-mail chris.coldwell@plymouth.gov.uk