

Project Brief: National Parks Intranet & Knowledge-Share Discovery Consultancy



August 2026

Project Title

National Parks Intranet & Knowledge-Share Discovery Project (Phase 1: Engagement, Requirements and Business Case)

Introduction

You are invited to submit a proposal to lead a discovery and engagement exercise that will define what the UK's 15 National Parks family needs from a new, modern knowledge-share and collaboration platform (an 'intranet'), and to build the case for replacing our current tool, Basecamp.

Background

The UK's 15 National Parks (see [Schedule 1](#)) provide numerous benefits: supporting the nation's well-being; providing a home for biodiverse nature; capturing and storing huge quantities of CO2 in trees and peatland; and generating more than £5bn per annum in regional visitor spend. Each National Park is managed by a National Park Authority (NPA), a public authority tasked with oversight of the Park area and enhancing these benefits in collaboration with landowners within the Parks. The Parks are distributed across Great Britain: ten in England, two in Scotland, and three in Wales.

In 2016, NPP was established as a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), of which the 15 NPAs are the Members. NPP identifies, secures and manages commercial and strategic UK-level partnerships for the UK's 15 National Parks, and strives to grow the National Parks family's impact, resources and influence. Partnerships currently take the form of sponsor/funder partnerships, and by catalysing private finance to undertake nature restoration projects at the scale and pace needed to tackle the climate emergency and crisis. More information on NPP's partners and work can be found on our website: <https://nationalparks.co.uk>

NPP is the only UK-wide National Parks entity. Its 'superpower' is the National Park family itself: 15 linked organisations doing similar work, with the potential to learn from one another, share best practice, communicate easily on shared priorities, and feel part of a connected whole. This project is about turning that potential into practical, everyday reality through a well-designed digital platform.

Beyond the NPAs themselves, NPP recently took over the hosting of the National Parks UK Communications Unit – a team of three who manage UK-level comms to customers and visitors of the Parks and who "own" the National Parks UK brand and national messaging. Other entities in the National Park family include National Parks England, who represent the ten English National Parks as a collective voice, particularly in relation to policy, government and funding.

The work of NPP in particular involves close communication with the NPAs in order to seek and deliver on funding agreements with partners, although the NPAs themselves and, within their English remit, NPE, also collaborate on shared projects and goals. To date, this collaborative approach and group communication has been facilitated by Basecamp, an off-the-shelf solution that provides messaging, notice board, and document sharing capabilities.

The Project

NPP has been receiving grant funding from the Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) since 2023. The grant outputs in this time have broadly fallen into the following aims:

1. Act as a facilitator and share knowledge with and across the NPAs and National Landscape Association (NLA)
2. Build a pipeline of investable green finance projects
3. Progress green finance projects to investment readiness
4. Increase income to the Parks through corporate partnerships
5. Build the National Parks brand as a credible partner

Each of these workstreams require regular contact and knowledge and asset sharing with a variety of stakeholders and project teams across the NPAs. This is facilitated by email, phone call, Microsoft Teams and the Basecamp platform, but the lack of a purpose-built solution is now creating risk and inefficiencies across the ways that the NPAs work with each other, NPP and NPE.

As part of the 2026/27 grant, DEFRA has therefore tasked NPP with establishing a knowledge sharing and intranet resource (£100,000 budget, including one project developer post). Before that budget is committed to building or buying a specific tool, NPP wants to commission this shorter, upfront piece of work to properly understand user needs, define what ‘good’ looks like, and build an evidenced, compelling case for change – which will then inform a second, technical brief to select, procure and implement the platform itself.

Basecamp

Basecamp was originally adopted as a project management and collaboration tool. While it continues to serve that purpose, an internal review (available on request) found it does not effectively support organisation-wide knowledge sharing or communication across the National Park family. Key limitations identified include:

- Knowledge is siloed within individual projects, making it hard to discover guidance, policy, templates, best practice and examples from other parks.
- Limited collaboration across the wider family – most activity happens within individual projects rather than across all 15 parks.
- Information overload from indiscriminate notifications, causing important updates to be missed and users to disengage.
- No centralised, consistent template library for project, funding, reporting, comms or governance documents.
- No widely accessibly digital asset management system.
- Communication tools are project-focused, with no wider, role-based or interest-based communication capability.

Project Teams and Working Groups

The National Park family already has a strong foundation to build on: around 20 established, UK-wide professional officer working groups (for example Nature Recovery, Climate Change & Energy, Heads of Communications, Heads of IT, Learning & Engagement, Access & Recreation, and others), each represented by a lead CEO and supported by a named coordinator. These groups are at the heart of how the parks currently share expertise informally, and are a key channel – and primary beneficiary – for any new platform. A full list of current working groups will be shared with the appointed consultant.

Project Objectives

The objectives of this consultancy project are to:

1. Engage relevant stakeholder groups – National Park CEOs, practitioners across the professional officer working groups, and National Parks England (NPE) – to understand current ways of working, frustrations with Basecamp, and requirements of the new platform. There is a review of working groups underway at the moment, which will help this process.
2. Identify the key benefits and attributes that a modern intranet should deliver, drawing on this engagement and on the existing internal review of Basecamp.
3. Scope the essential and desirable requirements of the platform, reflecting the different needs of NPP, NPA CEOs, practitioners (as a primary group) and National Parks England, and being mindful of the sensitivities involved in sharing information across 15 independent organisations.
4. Build a clear, evidenced and compelling narrative that NPP can use to ‘sell in’ the case for change to the wider National Parks family.
5. Produce a brief for a second, technical consultant, who will use these findings to assess and recommend a specific product or tool and oversee its build and implementation.

Scope of Work & Deliverables

Working closely with Catherine Hawkins and Nathan Sharp, the consultant’s deliverables are set out in two phases below.

Phase 1: Discovery & Stakeholder Engagement

- Review existing materials and systems – the internal Basecamp review, information sharing platforms/intranets within the NPAs, the current working group structure, and the relevant sections of NPP's Defra bid – to establish a baseline understanding.
- Design and deliver an engagement programme covering: National Park CEOs (via existing governance/working group structures); practitioners across a representative sample of the professional officer working groups; and National Parks England. The consultant should propose the most appropriate mix of methods (e.g. interviews, workshops, short survey) for reaching these audiences efficiently.
- Identify current pain points, requirements, and sensitivities around information sharing (for example, competitive dynamics between parks, data ownership, and governance of shared content).
- Produce a clear, evidence-based summary of engagement findings.

Phase 2: Requirements, Business Case & Brief for Consultant 2

- Translate findings into a clear set of benefits, attributes and requirements for a modern knowledge-share platform.
- Develop a compelling business case / change narrative that NPP can use to engage and 'sell in' the new platform to the wider National Park family.
- Draft a brief for a second, technical consultant – someone able to assess and recommend a specific product or tool, and to project-manage its build and implementation – that clearly sets out the requirements, functionality, benefits and stakeholder context established in Phase 1.

Duration and Resourcing

The maximum budget for this project is £10,000 (excl. VAT). As an indication of scale, we expect the project to equate to approximately 12 days of work, though we welcome your view on this based on your proposed methodology.

In your response, please indicate:

- the number of days you expect the work to require (ideally an evidence-based projection)
- your day rate
- whether you are able to meet the final report deadline (see 'Timetable for this project' below)

Required Experience/Skills/Competencies (E = essential; D = desirable)

Relevant professional qualifications or experience	E
Demonstrable experience of working on multi-stakeholder projects	E
Previous experience of working on IT infrastructure or digital solutions projects	D
Experience of working with public authorities or local government	D

Reporting

The consultant will report to Nathan Sharp, Head of Operations. They will be required to provide written and verbal updates to members of NPP's Senior Leadership Team, relevant CEO working groups, and National Parks England, and to present final findings and the business case to the wider National Park family as part of the 'sell-in' process.

Regular progress reviews will be conducted against agreed deliverables, milestones and outcomes.

How to Respond

Please submit a proposal (maximum 3–4 pages) by 11th September to Nathan Sharp (nathan.sharp@nationalparks.co.uk) containing:

1. A short summary of your relevant experience and examples of similar work – particularly stakeholder engagement, digital or intranet strategy, and working within complex, multi-organisation environments.
2. Your proposed approach and methodology for this brief, including how you would engage and gather insight from NPP, CEOs, practitioners and NPE, and how you would approach building the business case and ‘sell-in’ narrative.
3. Cost breakdown and your earliest available start date (we need someone to start promptly).
4. A brief CV including experience and relevant training and qualifications.
5. Two references.

Evaluation of Responses

Responses will be evaluated according to the following weighted criteria:

Criteria	Potential Score	Weighting	Max Score
Compliance with brief	1-5	5	25
Price	1-5	4	20
Previous experience (see ‘Experience/Skills/Competencies’)	1-5	5	25
Outline of proposed methodology and engagement approach	1-5	5	25
Overall quality of submission (detail; presentation; clarity)	1-5	2	10
References	1-5	3	15
Maximum Possible Score			120

Timetable for this Project

Our indicative timetable for this project award is set out below (dates to be confirmed on issue of the brief):

Date	Activity
w/c 31st August 2026	Brief issued to consultants
11th September 2026	Responses return deadline
14th September 2026	Evaluation of responses
14th September 2026	Notification to successful bidder
14th September 2026	Contract award and start date
16th October 2026	Stakeholder engagement complete
2nd November 2026	Final report, business case and brief for Consultant 2 received

Terms and Conditions

Questions on tender submissions

If respondents have any questions they wish to ask NPP, they must submit them to Nathan.sharp@nationalparks.co.uk.

Award of contract

NPP will decide to whom the contract shall be awarded based on the evaluation criteria outlined above. NPP does not bind itself to accept the lowest priced response and reserves the right to accept the whole or parts of responses. NPP will notify acceptance of the proposal to the successful respondent as soon as is reasonably practicable in line with the timetable shown above. If two or more responses are evaluated with total scores within 5 points of each other, those bidders may be invited to a short (30 minute) interview.

Confidentiality

The details of these documents and all associated documents are to be treated as private and confidential for use only in connection with the tender process.

Freedom of Information

As this project is funded via a Defra grant, NPP may be required to disclose information submitted in response to this brief under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If you consider that any information in your response is commercially sensitive, please identify it and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. Even where information is marked as commercially sensitive, we may still be required to disclose it if a request is received. We may also be required to disclose details of unsuccessful responses.

Costs and expenses

NPP will not be responsible for, or pay for, expenses or losses which may be incurred in the preparation of a response to this brief.

Preparation of responses

For the preparation of their response and entering into a contract with NPP, respondents must ensure that they have all the information required and must satisfy themselves of the correct interpretation of terminology used in these documents.

Prices

All prices must be net and, where applicable, carriage paid with any and all discounts allowed for.

VAT

All prices and/or rates shall be exclusive of Value Added Tax.

Validity of Tenders

Responses shall be valid for a minimum of three calendar months from the closing date.

Sub-contractors

The names and addresses of any sub-contractors the respondent proposes to employ must be provided with the response.

Conflict of Interest

NPP requires all respondents to confirm whether any actual or potential conflicts of interest exist that may prevent them undertaking this work, and a description of measures they would adopt if a potential conflict of interest arose during or following completion of this work.

Debriefing

All unsuccessful respondents will be offered the opportunity to be given a debriefing. Requests for debriefing are to be made in writing.

NPP's Use of the Reports/Work

NPP may wish to publicly quote the consultant's report or work they have undertaken, including as part of the 'sell-in' to the wider National Park family. Respondents are requested to confirm that NPP may (at NPP's own discretion) do so without restriction.

Ownership

The intellectual property rights rest with NPP, not the respondent.

DECLARATION OF NON-COLLUSION

To: National Parks Partnerships LLP

The essence of selective tendering is that NPP shall receive bona fide competitive tenders from all firms tendering. In recognition of this principle, I/We certify that this is a bona fide tender, intended to be competitive and that I/We have not and will not (either personally or by anyone on my/our behalf):

1. Fix or adjust the amount of the tender (or the rate and prices quoted) by agreement with any other person;
2. Communicate to anyone, other than the person calling for this tender, the amount or approximate amount or terms of the proposed tender (except other than in confidence, where essential to obtain professional advice or insurance premium quotations required for the preparation of the tender);
3. Enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person that they shall refrain from tendering or as to the amount or terms of any tenders to be submitted;
4. Canvass or solicit any member, officer or other employee of NPP in connection with the award of this or any other NPP contract or tender;
5. Offer, give or agree to give any inducement or reward in respect of this or any other NPP contract or tender.

Signed (as in Tenders) duly
authorised to sign

.....

For and behalf of

.....

Date

.....

REFERENCES

Potential suppliers are required to submit details of two organisations with which contracts are currently, or have recently (last twelve months) been, held for the provision of your services. This is so that references may be obtained. NPP will wish to obtain an email/telephone reference for the successful tenderer prior to the award of the contract.

Reference 1

Organisation Name		Work provided, date provided, and comments:
Contact Name		
Role		
Address		
Telephone Number		
Email address		
Approx. contract sum	£	

Reference 2

Organisation Name		Work provided, date provided, and comments:
Contact Name		
Role		
Address		
Telephone Number		
Email address		
Approx. contract sum	£	

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE AND WILL BE USED PURELY AS A MEANS OF OBTAINING REFERENCES.

Schedule 1: The UK's 15 National Parks

- Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons)
- Broads
- Cairngorms
- Dartmoor
- Eryri (Snowdonia)
- Exmoor
- Lake District
- Loch Lomond and The Trossachs
- New Forest
- North York Moors
- Northumberland
- Peak District
- Pembrokeshire Coast
- South Downs
- Yorkshire Dales