

Outline contract for SEDN data managers

May 2009

Shropshire Environmental Data Network is seeking contractors who will undertake the role of collection, management and supply of data to the network, applying professional standards of quality control and data format.

The data collected by the network will be compiled using Mapmate into a master Mapmate hub, and from there distributed back to recorders and onward into databases and GIS systems operated by Shropshire Council, Natural England, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and the National Biodiversity Network. All the data collected by the network will be available to the data managers and will be redistributed to their network of recorders as appropriate.

We would like the contractors to adopt Mapmate in order that they can fully use its abilities – for example, to track changes to records, and to receive records back from the system. If they cannot or will not use Mapmate, it is still possible to have some limited involvement in SEDN. Training will be provided in its use.

Contractors are sought to cover some or all of the following specialist areas of work:

- Entomology
- Botany
- Ornithology
- Habitats
- Amphibians & reptiles
- Mammals

Suitable candidates might be self-employed or available on a part-time release basis from their employment, and able to comply with our standards of pay, employment law, equal opportunities, etc., or for smaller contracts they might simply work on evenings and weekends. Alternatively, groups can bid for such work and use the income to support their activities if they prefer.

The purpose of this project is to accumulate data that is required for the operation of SEDN, as well as to develop voluntary recording groups and activities. A contractor will typically be the organiser of a recording scheme in one of these taxonomic areas. We are seeking individuals who can deliver this work with a minimum of support, because we do not have the resources for a centralised data management team.

Recording activities and data supplied will need to be focused on the information that is of use to SEDN – highly detailed and accurate records of species of conservation interest. Current recording is favoured over historical data sets. Under special circumstances it is possible to designate a small number of records confidential, but only if there is a known threat to the species concerned from release of this information. Otherwise, all data collected by this project will be deemed public knowledge and will be made available for public release through the appropriate mechanisms.

Contracts will be issued for a period of one year in the first instance, but it is intended that they will be renewable and renegotiable annually to facilitate a growing network of recorders. Potential contractors should supply the following information in their bids, and successful candidates will be selected on the basis of the quality and value of the work they propose. Things that could be bid for include:

1. To provide annual, or more frequent, updates of data to the MapMate hub and/or the Shropshire Wildlife Trust.
2. Identifying priority sites or general areas (tetrads, etc) for survey
3. Visiting survey priority sites/areas

4. Creating UK and Local BAP species lists for Shropshire, including proposing new LBAP species to the BAP Steering Group
5. Reporting on BAP species status, trends and losses in a form that can be easily uploaded to BARS. For some species groups we recognise that this is likely to include several 'unknown' entries.
6. Providing a point of contact for specific species-based enquiries including occasional non-typical planning issues.
7. Training needs for the group
8. Attending data managers meetings if required – likely to be less than 4 per annum.
9. Providing updates of field meeting listings for publication on the Natural Shropshire web site and elsewhere

Example contracts

Example 1

- Taxonomic coverage: charophytes
- Number of records to be supplied in 2009-2010: 500
- Date range of the data: all records currently available, dated 1900-2008, plus an anticipated 20 new records for this year (but we can't guarantee anything!).
- Proposed development of recording network: we propose to compile the data into a Flora for electronic publication in May 2010 to provide context; 50 specimens to be lodged at an appropriate museum (Shrewsbury or Ludlow).
- Price quoted for this work: £3,000.
- Financial arrangement: payment to the Shropshire Charophyte Recording Scheme Ltd.

Example 2

- Taxonomic coverage: bumblebees
- Number of records to be supplied in 2009-2010: 100 records of the rare bee *Bombus elusivus*.
- Date range of the data: 2009-2010
- Proposed development of recording network: I am going to hold a recording session to teach people to identify *B. elusivus*, and visit all known sites to advise landowners of management.
- Price quoted for this work: £1,000.
- Financial arrangement: I work full time and would like to claim it as expenses, rather than income, if that is OK. I can provide receipts.

Potential contractors should feel free to discuss their proposals with Alex Lockton and need to be aware that all details of any contract awarded will be publicly available. All data supplied must be legitimately the property of the supplier, and full rights for use of data will be given to SEDN on receipt of payment (although originators will of course retain access).

To make a bid, please simply write half a page saying what you propose to do, and it will be considered by SEDN on 13th July. The best offers will be selected, and then you will be contacted by Shropshire Council to finalise the contract. Bids will be considered for how much useful data they can provide and how much they can help develop recording. The focus is on ecologically important and protected species. We have a total of £15k to spend this year – you can bid for all or a part of that; and it is OK to make plans for future years, although we will not be able to commit to supporting that except if circumstances allow.

Alex Lockton – email alex@whildassociates.co.uk or coordinator@bsbi.org.uk.