



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Tender for:

***Cemetery Consultants for a New Cemetery in
Dunstable***

Introduction

About Dunstable Town Council

Dunstable Town Council was formed in 1985 and is one of the country's largest town councils within the town and parish sector of local government. Dunstable is situated in Bedfordshire within the Central Bedfordshire Council local authority area.

The council consists of 18 councillors who represent five wards and serve a population of some 37,000 people. The council is responsible for providing various services and facilities for the town, including parks, cemeteries, allotments, markets, community engagement, town events, mayoral and civic duties. The council also works in partnership with other organisations to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Dunstable and its residents.

The council is seeking to appoint a consultant with strong and demonstrable experience of developing new cemetery land for future burial needs.

The council invites proposals from suitably qualified and experienced consultants who can demonstrate the ability to meet and deliver the objectives detailed within this tender document.

The successful tenderer will be expected to work closely with the council's project team throughout the entire project.

Objective

Dunstable Town Council (DTC) is looking to appoint a consultant who can assist with delivering the following objectives associated with a new Dunstable cemetery:

- To provide adequate burial space for Dunstable the next 50+ years.
- To incorporate traditional burial methods and consider options for green and alternative burials.
- To incorporate traditional, new and sustainable memorialisation options.
- To ensure accessibility and inclusivity for all faiths and communities.
- To incorporate green infrastructure and biodiversity.
- To create a peaceful, respectful, and well-maintained environment.
- To comply with all burial legislation and other legal, environmental, and planning regulations.
- To enable efficient management of the site by cemetery and grounds staff.
- To use part of the land as 'meanwhile' allotment land.

The Council has drafted and formally approved an outline project brief for the development of a new cemetery facility and a copy is available at Appendix A.

The outline brief sets out the scope of works and the key aspirations and requirements to be explored and investigated through the design process.

Tender Introduction

The Council is issuing this tender document to attract potential tenderers to bid for the consultancy work to support the development process from inception through to completion.

This document contains details of how to submit a bid, the full nature of the consultancy requirements and indicative timescales. The successful consultant will be required to provide a detailed project programme with timescales using its expert knowledge and experience within this field.

Should you wish to discuss the tender process or seek clarification on any matter please contact John Crawley, Head of Grounds and Environmental Services by email john.crawley@dunstable.gov.uk

It is important to the Council that a single consultant can provide the necessary consultancy support, project management and account management. To aid this, the consultant must be able to offer clear points of contact for specific roles and responsibilities and must have the ability to manage all third party suppliers of services.

The consultant may sub-contract the delivery of services, if this is made clear in the tender response, provided that it does not interfere with clear communications and accountability. The tenderer must provide details on how they validate the suitability of any sub-contractors and all parties must have professional indemnity insurance arrangements in place which are applicable to the services provided.

The consultant must state clearly in their tender response that they remain entirely responsible for the delivery of the service, the quality of that service and its associated communications. This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring that all services are delivered in compliance with appropriate regulations and standards. The use of sub-contractors must be entirely transparent to the Council.

The Council has already identified land that is potentially suitable as future burial land. The land has been assessed in line with Tier 3 Groundwater Risk Assessment (GRA) requirements and a copy of the assessment work completed to date is available at Appendix D.

The GRA has been submitted to the Environment Agency and copy of their response to the findings is also provided with Appendix E.

Submission Details

Consultants wishing to participate in this tender process must ensure that they have read this document in full, including the appendices. The tenderer must complete and provide the following documents as part of the tender submission:

- Appendix B Tender Response Form – Parts 1 to 6
- A detailed consultancy proposal to include:
 - An introduction and background information about the company.
 - Details of similar projects delivered in the last 5 years in the UK.
 - Three references from clients for whom the company have delivered similar projects in the last 5 years in the UK.
 - Information about the consultancy team, associates and third-party contractors or specialists.
 - Any other supporting documentation detailing the company's ability to provide the consultancy services and project delivery.
 - An indicative timescale for the works based on the RIBA Stages 1 to 6 and any other additional works or compliances identified by the tenderer.
 - Details and proof of professional indemnity insurance arrangements.
 - Confirmation of mobilisation within two weeks of appointment.
- Appendix C – Pricing Schedule to include:
 - Itemised pricing for RIBA stages 1 to 3 as set out in the schedule.
 - Cost estimates / allowances for RIBA stages 4 to 6 as set out in the schedule.
 - Identification and pricing of any additional items within RIBA stages 1 to 6 which the tenderer considers essential to the successful delivery of the project or are required as part of legal or regulatory compliance.
 - Disbursements where known.
 - Day Rates for various levels of consultant, associate or third-party suppliers.

Tenderers should note that the cost estimates / allowances and the Day Rates entered as part of the tender submission will be used as the basis upon which the value of RIBA stages 4 to 6 will be finalised between the client and the successful tenderer.

Instructions and Information on the Tender Document and Process

Important notice

The Council have issued this Request for Quotation (RFQ) to interested tenderers, to allow them and their professional advisers to prepare a Quotation for this Contract and for no other purpose.

The Council give this RFQ and any other documentation that the Council sends to tenderers for this quotation process, on the basis that they remain the Council's property and tenderers must treat the contents as confidential. If tenderers are unable or unwilling to abide by this requirement they:

- must destroy this RFQ and all associated documents at once; and
- must not keep any electronic or paper copies.

Tenderers must not take part in any publicity activities with any part of the media about the Contract or this RFQ process without first obtaining the Council's written agreement. Any written agreement will include detail on format, content and use.

This RFQ is made available in good faith. The Council give no warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in it. The Council also disclaim any liability for any inaccuracy or incompleteness. The Council reserve the right to cancel the Quotation process at any point.

The following details and instructions are designed to ensure that all tenders are given equal and fair consideration. It is important, therefore, that tenderers provide all the information in the format and order specified.

Pre-tender negotiations are not permitted.

Contract Period

The contract period will be set in accordance with the successful tenderers detailed project plan timescales following full discussion with the Town Council. Continuation beyond RIBA stage 3 will be subject to satisfactory performance by the consultant on RIBA stages 1 to 3 and by mutual agreement.

The Town Council expects to reach a decision on the award of the contract on 16 March 2026 with the successful tenderer notified on 17 March 2026 after which a 10-day standstill period will be observed. Final confirmation of the contract award will be made on 28 March 2026.

The successful tenderer will be required to mobilise to commence works no later than two weeks after receiving confirmation of the award of the contract.

Incomplete Tender Documents

Tender responses may be rejected if the information requested is incomplete or proves to be inaccurate.

Receipt of Tender Documents

The completed tender form and associated documents must be emailed to accounts@dunstable.gov.uk with subject 'Tender for Cemetery Consultants for a New Dunstable Cemetery'.

Tender submissions must be received no later than 12 noon on Friday 30 January 2026.

Tender submissions received before the due date will be retained until the deadline. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that their submission is received no later than the deadline.

By issuing this invitation the Council is not bound in any way to continue with the tender process.

Inducements

Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this or any other contract with the Council will disqualify the tenderer from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

Confidentiality of Tenders

Tenderers must comply with the following requirements and must not:

- Share what their tender price is or will be before the deadline for submission of tenders.
- Try to obtain any information about anyone else's tender or proposed tender before the deadline for submission of tenders.
- Make any arrangements with another organisation about whether or not they should tender, or about their or your tender price.

Failure to comply with these conditions may disqualify the tender.

Costs and Expenses

Tenderers will not be entitled to claim from the Town Council any costs or expenses incurred in preparing the tender or expression of interest, whether or not the tender is successful.

Freedom of Information

The Council is committed to open government and to meeting their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted to the Council may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act.

If the tenderer considers that any of the information included in their tender is commercially sensitive, this should be identified along with an explanation in (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure.

Tenderers should be aware that, even where they have indicated that information is

commercially sensitive, the Town Council may still be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received. Please also note that the receipt of any material marked 'confidential' or equivalent by the Council should not be taken to mean that the Council accepts any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking.

If a request is received, the Town Council may also be required to disclose details of unsuccessful tenders or expressions of interest.

Tender Scoring

Each tender response will be evaluated against an agreed scoring method. The scoring will be based on the weighted system described below.

Evaluation	Criteria	Weight
1. Qualitative	Proposal & Quality Response	45%
2. Financial	Financial Response	50%
3. Social value	EDI Form (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion)	5%

Conclusions

Whilst every endeavour has been made to give tenderers an accurate description of the Council's requirement, tenderers should make their own assessment about the methods and resources needed to meet those requirements.

Tender Timeline

The tender process timeline is outlined below. All dates may be subject to change.

Please note that following initial evaluation of tenders and associated scoring, a selection of tenderers may be invited to make a full presentation to a panel followed by a Q&A session. This presentation will form part of the Council's decision-making process for award of the contract.

Procurement Stage	Date / Timescale
Tender documents issued	12 January 2026
Deadline for clarifications	23 January 2026
Deadline for submissions	12 noon on 30 January 2026
Invitations to present issued	9 February 2026

Presentations	16 February 2026 – Timings to be confirmed
Decision made on appointment and communicated	Decision made – 16 March 2026 Decision communicated – 17 March 2026
Standstill period (10 days)	18 March 2026 to 27 March 2026
Chosen Supplier Confirmed	28 March 2026

The Council holds the right to enter final commercial negotiations with the successful tenderer before signing contracts.

Compliance

All tenderers are expected to confirm they comply with the following legislation / standards and as a minimum are required to provide the following documents with their submission:

- Equality Act 2010 preferably via the company's Equality and Diversity Policy
- General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018 preferably via the company's Information Security Policy that reflects the control objectives as specified within the ISO27001 control set.
- Health and Safety Policy
- Other documentation required in accordance with Appendix B – Tender Response Form

Outline of Council Requirements

Dunstable Town Council is looking to secure the services of a suitably qualified and experienced consultancy to assist with developing a new burial facility for Dunstable and surrounding areas.

The Council requires the successful consultant to undertake works in accordance with the requirements set out in the Pricing Schedule at Appendix C.

Tenderers are also required to identify and price any additional items not currently included within the Pricing Schedule which are considered essential to the successful delivery of the project or are required as part of legal or regulatory compliance.

Tenderers must also demonstrate their ability to provide creative solutions to achieve the overall aims and objectives of the project as set out in the outline project brief.

Tenderers must also be able to demonstrate their ability to work closely with and advise Elected Members and Council Officers to further develop a strong design brief,

prepare a concept design, undertake a range of surveys, investigation and reports, prepare planning documentation and provide cost estimates.

The ability to clearly demonstrate strong project management will also be essential.

With regard to timescales for the successful completion of the project to the point that burial can take place on a new site, the Council has estimated that it has a current burial capacity of around 30 months. It will therefore be important for tenderers to demonstrate that they have sufficient resources and capacity to undertake the works within this timeframe.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A - Outline Project Brief for the Development of a New Cemetery for Dunstable

Appendix B - Tender Response Form

Appendix C - Pricing Schedule

Appendix D - T3 Groundwater Risk Assessment Rev1 - Cottage Bottom Field Dunstable

Appendix E - Response from Environment Agency - Cottage Bottom Field.