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External Tender Brief

Public Artwork Commission – Charterhouse Heritage Park

Maximum Fee: £6000 - £8000 (including VAT)

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WKWT), on behalf of The Sherbourne Valley Project, is seeking to commission an artist or artist team to design, fabricate and install a permanent public artwork within Charterhouse Heritage Park, Coventry.

Background

Charterhouse Heritage Park is one of Coventry's most significant green spaces, combining nationally important heritage with a recovering natural landscape. Recent restoration works have included the creation of new wetland habitats, wildlife ponds and improvements to the River Sherbourne corridor, helping reconnect people with the landscape whilst increasing biodiversity.

The commissioned artwork will become a permanent feature within the park, helping visitors connect with the stories, wildlife and history of Charterhouse Heritage Park. It should complement the landscape rather than dominate it and become a feature that visitors naturally discover and enjoy.

The artwork is expected to be located either:

- Adjacent to the recently created wildlife pond
- Within the wider pond landscape
- In another nearby location that provides an appropriate setting whilst maintaining ecological sensitivity

The final location will be agreed in consultation with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Coventry City Council and several other partners involved in the management of Charterhouse Heritage Park.

The Brief

We are seeking an artist capable of producing a high-quality permanent sculpture that responds to the unique character of Charterhouse Heritage Park.

The sculpture should:

- Celebrate one or more of the themes of heritage, nature and culture
- Create a meaningful connection between visitors and the landscape
- Complement the surrounding environment and feel as though it belongs within the setting

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- Be visually engaging throughout the year
- Encourage curiosity and conversation
- Be durable, safe and suitable for long-term outdoor installation
- Require minimal ongoing maintenance

Possible themes include, but are not limited to:

- The history of Charterhouse and the wider heritage park
- The River Sherbourne and its importance to Coventry
- Native wildlife and habitats
- Wetland ecology
- Local folklore or historic stories
- The relationship between people and nature
- Renewal, restoration and resilience

We welcome proposals that demonstrate originality while respecting the sensitive character of the site. We are looking for a sculpture that becomes synonymous with Charterhouse Heritage Park. The sculpture should be an artwork that visitors remember, photograph and return to, whilst remaining respectful of one of Coventry's most important historic and natural landscapes.

Scope of Commission

The appointed artist will be expected to undertake the following:

- Site visit(s) and familiarisation with Charterhouse Heritage Park.
- Development of an initial concept.
- Presentation of concept drawings and visualisations.
- Design development following feedback.
- Provision of technical drawings and installation details early enough to support permissions and approvals.
- Liaising with the project team throughout the planning process where technical information is required.
- Fabrication of the artwork.
- Transportation to site.
- Installation of the sculpture.
- Provision of any required installation method statements and risk assessments.
- Supply of maintenance guidance for the completed artwork.

Artists should clearly identify any specialist contractors they intend to use.

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Budget

The available budget is: £6,000–£8,000 (inclusive of VAT).

This budget should include all costs associated with the commission, including:

- artist fees
- design development
- materials
- fabrication
- transport
- installation
- equipment hire
- foundations (where applicable)
- contractor costs
- travel
- insurance
- contingency

Design Considerations

The successful proposal should demonstrate consideration of:

- the relationship between nature, heritage and people
- the changing seasons and surrounding landscape
- views across the pond and River Sherbourne corridor
- the ecological sensitivity of the location
- accessibility and inclusivity for all visitors
- longevity and sustainability

Materials are decided by the proposing artist. However, artists should demonstrate that their chosen materials are:

- durable in an outdoor environment
- environmentally safe
- resistant to weathering and vandalism where appropriate
- low maintenance
- sympathetic to the heritage character of Charterhouse Heritage Park

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Interpretation

Interpretation panels are already planned within the surrounding area and will explain the newly created wildlife pond, pond dipping, the River Sherbourne and nearby heritage features including the historic sluice gate and railway viaduct.

Artists should therefore not assume that interpretation is required as part of the commission. However, if the proposed artwork would benefit from additional interpretation to fully communicate its meaning, artists are welcome to include suggestions as part of their submission

Community Engagement

Artists are encouraged to consider opportunities for community engagement during the design or fabrication process. This may include workshops, volunteer involvement or public consultation where appropriate.

Such activity is welcomed but is not a mandatory part of the commission. Any engagement should be realistic and deliverable within the project programme timelines.

Maintenance and Warranty

The successful artist shall provide:

- maintenance recommendations
- cleaning guidance where appropriate
- details of the expected lifespan of materials
- a recommended inspection schedule
- a 12-month defects warranty following installation (desirable)

Deliverables

The successful artist will provide:

- agreed concept design
- final fabrication drawings (where required)

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- completed sculpture
- installation on site
- maintenance guidance
- high-quality photographs of the completed work suitable for publicity

Expectations

We expect the appointed artist to:

- attend an inception meeting with the project team
- communicate regularly throughout the commission
- work collaboratively with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and relevant stakeholders
- carry appropriate public liability insurance
- comply with all site health and safety requirements
- undertake the work to a professional standard within the agreed programme

Submission Requirements

Tender submissions should include:

- an outline of the proposed artistic concept
- sketches, mood boards or indicative visuals
- examples of previous relevant commissions
- a short statement describing the artistic approach
- an outline programme
- full cost breakdown
- details of materials proposed
- details of proposed size of sculpture
- details of maintenance requirements
- confirmation of insurance cover

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be assessed against:

- Artistic quality and creativity.
- Response to the brief.
- Understanding of the site.

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- Quality and durability of proposed materials.
- Deliverability within budget.
- Relevant experience.
- Value for money.

Timescale

Tender issued - 13th July 2026

Tender return deadline – 27th July 2026

Artist appointment – 31st July 2026

Design development - August 2026

Fabrication - August–September 2026

Installation - By the end of September 2026 (October 2026 at the latest)

Background Reading

Interested artists are encouraged to familiarise themselves with:

- The Sherbourne Valley Project
- Charterhouse Heritage Park
- Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
- Coventry's historic River Sherbourne
- Charterhouse Conservation and Heritage information

Relevant documents will be provided with this tender.

Ownership

Upon final payment, ownership of the completed sculpture and all associated design rights relating to the commissioned work shall transfer to Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

The Trust reserves the right to photograph, reproduce and promote images of the artwork for educational, promotional and interpretation purposes.



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Artists will, of course, continue to be credited as the creator of the work whenever reasonably practicable.

Schedule

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust will pay the appointed as follows:

- Any required initial fees necessary for acquiring materials, creating and installing the sculpture
- Delivery of the fully constructed sculpture

Contact

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Download Links

Additional Reading Pack:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IBrpk28FHDYOINDW_zpORvlexbok2avv?usp=drive_link