

GARDEN MUSEUM



Consultant Brief: Business Planner

Project: 'Benton End Revived' – Renewal and Reimagination of a Historic Arts and Horticultural Site

Client: The Garden Museum

Location: Benton End, Hadleigh, Suffolk

Funded by: The National Lottery Heritage Fund (the Heritage Fund)

Project Budget: £4.9 million (target), including £2.9 million from Heritage Fund

Contract Period: Development Phase

1. Project Summary

The Garden Museum is seeking an experienced Business Planner to support the renewal of the historic gardens and wider landscape of Benton End, a site of national significance for its horticultural innovation and its artistic legacy. Working closely with the Activity Planner, the Project Manager, the VAT specialist adviser and the client team, the Business Planner will finalise the ten-year operational plan to balance commercial success with the Heritage Fund's Investment Principles.

2. Project Vision and Objectives

The redevelopment of Benton End seeks to:

- Conserve and restore the Grade II* listed house and associated gardens structures
- Create inclusive and accessible facilities for learning, exhibitions, and residencies
- Respect and celebrate the site's layered heritage, including its significance in queer history
- Embed sustainability and environmental responsibility in all design choices
- Enable operational and financial sustainability through a mixed-use business model

3. Scope of work

- A review of the existing Business Planning work, with suggestions for other potential income streams or areas of investigation as appropriate.
- A market appraisal which tests potential market/consumer demand and competition for the proposed offer. The business planner will undertake further consultation to

test evidence of demand for each activity on offer. The market appraisal should include an outline marketing strategy to be delivered by a new member of staff, the marketing officer, in the Delivery Phase.

- A financial appraisal which sets out the potential income and expenditure for each income stream; a 10-year profit and loss forecast for Benton End; and a sensitivity analysis based on identified risks. The Plan should also include a cashflow forecast which includes operational income and expenditure, and income and expenditure related to the Heritage Fund project.
- Commercial proposals and business models for each earned income stream (rental, retail, food & beverage, courses, workshops etc.)
- Proposals for the management structure of Benton End beyond the project Delivery Phase.
- Suggestions to support the governance of Benton End, where appropriate, and with the Garden Museum's governance in mind.
- Work with the VAT consultant to identify VAT implications.
- Advise on role descriptions to be produced by the client.

4. Key Deliverables

- Review, analysis and critique of existing business plan, submitted to The National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2025.
- Reporting, appraising and forward planning including:
 - Gathering and presenting evidence of demand for proposed activities
 - Reporting on alternative income streams
 - Producing market appraisal underpinned by competitor analysis of comparable offers e.g. Landmark Trust
 - Producing outline Marketing strategy: making recommendations for marketing, and ensuring that marketing is costed within the expenditure
 - Producing financial appraisal including potential income and expenditure
 - Producing 10-year profit and loss forecast for Benton End
 - Producing sensitivity analysis based on identified risks
 - Producing relevant risk registers
 - Producing cashflow forecast showing operational income and expenditure
 - Producing management structure proposal for Benton End beyond Benton End Revived
 - Providing options suggestions for the governance of Benton End, where appropriate

- Stress testing and assumption checking of all forward plans
- Suggesting how to integrate Benton End into wider Garden Museum operations and plans
- Write and implement a plan to achieve commercial success over ten years with key objectives in this area to include:
 - Achieve operational break-even after 8 years and to grow a minimum of 10% each subsequent year
 - Reduce reliance on grant funding beyond the project by 50%. So that grant funding accounts for 40% overall operational budget in the future
 - Deliver a diversified income portfolio

5. Collaboration and interfaces

The Business Plan should be an active and useful working document for Benton End, as well as being compliant with Heritage Fund guidance. The Plan should demonstrate how Benton End will be financially sustainable beyond the Heritage Fund grant period.

The Business Planner will need to work closely with the client team, and the consultant team, and will be expected to join monthly online progress meetings and ad hoc meetings outside of the formal schedule. They may be invited to join the mid stage review meeting with the Heritage Fund.

The commercial offer will need to align with and complement the community engagement programme set out in the Activity Plan. The financial appraisal will need to include and reflect the financial implications of delivering the Activity Plan, and Management and Maintenance Plan, during and beyond the time period of the Heritage Fund project. A joint approach to monitoring and evaluation will be developed with the Evaluation Consultant. The Business Planner will advise the capital team on implications of income generating activity for the development of architectural designs. The Business Planner will work with the VAT consultant to identify VAT implications of the operational model.

6. Project Timeline

Development Phase: April 2026 – August 2027

Milestones:

- By end June 2026: Business Planner appointed to project
- By August 2026: All consultants recruited and begin work on project
- December 2026: Client review and sign-off for RIBA stage 2
- March 2027: Draft Business Plan produced for client review
- March 2027: Mid Stage Review with the Heritage Fund
- May 2027: Client review and sign-off for RIBA stage 3

- End June 2027: Final Business Plan produced for client review and sign off
- August 2027: Delivery phase application submitted
- December 2027: Decision from Heritage Fund

7. Budget

- The project's overall target budget is £4.9 million, inclusive of VAT.
- Business Planner Consultant fee is up to £20,000 excl VAT.
- The above includes all day-to-day travel and expenses.
- We expect that the Business Planner will be present on-site and locally to complete elements of the 'market appraisal' and 'evidence of demand' portions of the brief at least.
- There is a budget of up to £1,500 to support the delivery of the 'market appraisal' and 'evidence of demand' portions of the brief.
- This commission covers the Development Phase of the project only.

8. Application Requirements

Please submit the following to bentonend@gardenmuseum.org.uk by 5pm, Tuesday 19 May 2026:

- At least two, and up to three case studies of similar business plans at an equivalent level of complexity and heritage significance
- References from comparable heritage or arts capital projects
- Consultant Team details demonstrating relevant experience and examples of previous projects
- Outline methodology and approach
- Fee proposal
- Confirmation of insurance (minimum £5 million Professional Indemnity and £1 million Public/Employers Liability cover, or ability and willingness to obtain)

Please send clarifying questions to bentonend@gardenmuseum.org.uk by 5pm, Tuesday 5 May 2026.

9. Tender evaluation / weighting

Selection of the successful consultant will be based on:

- a) Proven experience of similar work at an equivalent level of complexity and heritage significance (**25%**). Page limit of 4 sides of A4, including any supporting imagery. Please note this will represent the first sift and tenderers not meeting this requirement will not progress further.

- b) Details of the individuals within the proposed Consultant Team (including all sub-consultants), including their roles and responsibilities, and relevant Heritage Fund experience. The structure of the proposed team is to be shown in a team organogram **(15%)**. Page limit of 4 sides of A4, including any supporting imagery (CVs can be provided in a separate appendix).
- c) Methodology, including any commentary on the proposed Development Stage programme **(20%)**. Page limit of 4 sides of A4, including any supporting imagery.
- d) Understanding of the brief, assessment of key issues and how objectives will be met **(10%)**. Page limit of 4 sides of A4, including any supporting imagery.
- e) Value for money (tender price) **(30%)**.

10. Decision making process

Tenders will be assessed and moderated by members of the Garden Museum Senior Management Team and at least one trustee.

Shortlisted consultancies may be invited to interview.

A final evaluation report with a recommended appointee will be submitted to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for approval.

11. Appendix

'Benton End Revived' Procurement Guidelines; containing further information and appendices relevant to the project.

This opportunity is made possible thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery players.