

## Asset Based Climate Action – specialist support for Big Local areas: an invitation to tender

[Local Trust](#) is seeking an organisation or collection of organisations or freelancers, to work alongside [Big Local partnerships](#)<sup>1</sup> that wish to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the climate crisis and the transition to a net zero economy.

### About Local Trust and Big Local

Local Trust was established in 2012 to deliver the [Big Local](#) funding programme. Between 2010-12 the Big Lottery Fund identified 150 areas that had historically ‘missed out’ on lottery and other funding. Each of those areas was allocated £1.1m of Big Local funding, which could be spent in any way, provided local residents organised themselves locally to plan and manage that funding, involving the wider community in the decision-making process.

The timeframe for Big Local extends over 15 years, allowing communities to take their time, build confidence and skills, make decisions and deliver change without the usual pressures to meet end-of-year spend targets or other arbitrary bureaucratic deadlines.

The activities and initiatives Big Local areas have chosen to take forward reflect the diversity of the communities themselves. They include everything from building affordable homes to tackling antisocial behaviour, creating or preserving community facilities, parks and sports centres; launching new training and employment schemes; tackling local health and environmental issues; addressing community cohesion; and providing more activities for young people.

As well as providing funding, Local Trust offers residents involved in Big Local areas access to support to deliver and develop their plans<sup>2</sup>. This is an extensive programme that includes training, networking and light-touch on the ground support. Full details can be found [here](#). The successful organisation from this tender would be part of our support partner offer and link into our learning and networking programme.

Local Trust, our partners and people in Big Local areas<sup>3</sup> are passionate about what we’re doing. We think Big Local is building on previous community-based regeneration programmes and putting power and control in the hands of those who live in the areas. Critically, our ambition is not simply to deliver a programme, but to shape and influence policy and practice through shared learning from the Big Local programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Big Local partnerships refers to the mostly un-constituted community group that leads the Big Local project in their area, the partnership is made up of at least 50% of people who are residents from the Big Local area

<sup>2</sup> Each Big Local partnership, through consultation and drawing on insight into the needs and opportunities in their area, develops a plan of activity that helps deliver their priorities and the overall programme outcomes

<sup>3</sup> Big Local area refers to the boundary defined areas which have been granted Big Local funding. You can see a map of all 150 areas here: <https://localtrust.org.uk/map/>

## Big Local and the Climate emergency

The Big Local programme is running at a time when we are waking up to one of humanity's biggest challenges – the climate emergency. The climate crisis, and the response to it, present opportunities for communities in the UK as well as threats, which is why Local Trust recently [commissioned research](#) to learn more about how communities can thrive in a changing climate. The report highlights the breadth and depth of local community innovation that is happening across the country, where local people are coming together to create shared low carbon assets and in so doing improve their health, wellbeing and local neighbourhood, while reducing poverty and increasing local control. For communities like those where Big Local areas are located, climate action is often not the primary goal for initiatives and emissions reductions are often a co-benefit.

Now over halfway into the Big Local programme and with Big Local areas focusing on the legacy they want to create in their community, there is an interest from a number of Big Local areas in developing climate action as a co-benefit of addressing local priorities. From building low-carbon community hubs, generating sustainable incomes through power generation, saving people money on heating, addressing food poverty, improving green space, and much more. Added to this, nearly all Big Local areas are, by rebuilding social infrastructure, taking climate action through [every day community development work](#) – building the resilience of their community, and their ability to respond to future shocks. Working with over 20 representatives from Big Local areas, we have explored the support the Big Local partnerships would find helpful to be able to 'climate proof' their Big Local plans<sup>4</sup>.

We are looking for an organisation or collection of providers who can work collaboratively with Local Trust to provide on demand advice and guidance to Big Local partnerships. The expected outcome of this work is that interested Big Local areas have the support, knowledge, confidence and connections to be able to 'climate proof' their existing and future Big Local plans. We envisage this work being offered through a mixture of bespoke support tailored towards the needs of each interested Big Local partnership and peer and learning support that brings people working on Big Local together to develop their knowledge, skills and ideas through learning and sharing with others.

Our expectation is that the support will be open to all 150 Big Local areas across England, however, take up in the offer will be led by area demand. To give an idea of possible take-up of an offer, in the last year one of our support partners has worked with four Big Local areas concurrently, offering a range of services from ad hoc advice to longer term support for more complex projects. And our recent community led regeneration network has around 20 members involved.

Beyond the specialist expertise for the work, the successful contractors will need to understand, or quickly develop an understanding, of Big Local, our values, ethos and approach to creating and supporting resident-led change. We need high quality and appropriate support, as well as a passion and commitment to our work.

### **1. Offering specialist in area support to 'climate proof Big Local plans'**

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<sup>4</sup> <https://localtrust.org.uk/big-local/programme-guidance/the-big-local-plan/>

The focus of this work is to offer Big Local areas access to the expert support and advice they need to weave climate action into their Big Local plans, and have the connections they need to take action.

In our experience this works best where areas have access to a consultant who will spend time getting to know the community and its priorities and offer context-specific advice and support, which builds on the existing assets (people and places) in their community. Big Local areas have really reinforced the need for providers to be able to invest in working with them over a long period of time, and for there to be continuity in the lead person they work with.

We envisage that this support could involve:

- Spending time understanding the Big Local partnership and its priorities, the historical and current context and ambitions and the assets that exist in that community.
- Researching the local and regional challenges and opportunities presented by climate change. This could include understanding the risks associated with the decarbonising of the economy in that region, or the flood or heat risks, where opportunities might lie and what local partners or funding sources exist to support action, such as community energy groups or local funders.
- Supporting the Big Local partnership and the wider community to explore and discuss what climate change means for their community.
- Working with the Big Local partnership to 'climate proof' their Big Local plan. This might include pulling out what can already be considered climate action and presenting a range of tangible actions they could take. Actions could range from small steps which amplify what they are already doing, to bold ideas that scale up initiatives, while offering a roadmap of how to deliver and who they might need further help from.
- Acting as a critical friend to explore ideas the Big Local partnership members have, and bringing in relevant advice to explore or interrogate ideas in more detail.
- Researching and brokering relationships with relevant organisations or specialists who can provide additional advice, or act as delivery partners.

Here is a flavour of some of the ideas Big Local areas have been exploring/ have explored previously and may be looking for more support around:

- Installing renewable heat projects in community buildings and accessing renewable heat incentives. In this example, providers would need access to people who understand the RHI schemes and technicalities of renewable heat projects.
- Electric car/ quadricycle loan schemes to aid mobility in communities with poor transport connections.
- Designing and building carbon neutral community buildings
- Preparing young people for the future net zero economy
- Exploring the opportunities associated with the retrofitting of housing.
- Buying land to develop a community orchard (in this instance we would ask the providers to sign post to our partners [Shared Assets](#) for the land negotiation)
- Encouraging walking and cycling and traffic free zones
- Gardening and growing and mental health projects
- Food poverty action including delivering community pantries, food growing and foodbanks.

## 2. Peer support network development

People involved in Big Local talk about the value of networking and learning from and with others involved in Big Local. And this can be especially helpful when people have similar visions - having the opportunity to share ideas and strategies with people is reported as being supporting and inspirational.

We are looking for an organisation or collection of organisations or freelancers who have the capacity, knowledge, and skills to collaborate with Local Trust and Big Local Partnerships to develop and deliver relevant peer support between Big Local areas who are taking climate action.

Local Trust is happy to offer communications resource into this network, if relevant, so that the groups are able to share and amplify the stories of the action they are taking.

The aim of this peer support is to enhance connections, networks, peer support and wider opportunities for Big Local areas to learn from each other, to ultimately enhance the strength of the climate action these groups take.

The development of this support would have to be in response to the needs, interests, appetite for support and access requirements of the interested groups. Therefore we envisage this support would be developed and iterated as the providers get to know areas. We are interested in approaches with the potential for sustainability beyond the funded period of Big Local and those that promote deeper connections.

Possible activities could involve:

- Organising buddying between areas with a similar focus.
- Planning and hosting group networking sessions, which may focus on a certain theme (as identified as a need by the community groups).
- Holding action learning sets.
- Delivering guest speaker sessions – inviting in experts from across the community and climate sectors to share with the groups.
- Supporting the group to explore joint climate action projects.
- Working with the group on joint communication activities, an idea that was offered at the co-design workshop was communicating the impact Big Local areas are having collectively on climate.
- Coordinating visits to interesting projects.

## Eligibility Criteria

We are looking for an organisation or collection of organisations or freelancers who have diverse backgrounds, are inclusive in practice and have experience of working across a range of local communities in England on climate issues. And who can offer:

- A relational approach to working with Big Local partnerships.
- A broad and deep understanding of what the climate crisis and the opportunities and risks it presents for communities in the UK.
- Demonstrable skills, knowledge and experience of designing and facilitating peer learning support programmes, including both action learning sets and communities of practice.

- An understanding and investment in working through an asset-based approach – this means having the ability to listen to what exists within and is important to a community already, and framing any climate action within this context.
- Ability to thoroughly research the local and hyperlocal climate context of a given Big Local area – understanding the local threats (e.g flooding/ decarbonising economy) and opportunities (e.g funding or government initiatives) as well as who the potential local (and national) partners might be.
- Ability to produce accessible reports/ presentations that support the Big Local partnership to explore climate actions they could potentially take, as part of their Big Local plan and who they might need to work with.
- Connection to climate action networks – meaning that they can draw on their network to broker introductions with specialists as needed, who can provide Big Local partnerships with advice, for example on building net zero community hubs, renewable heat incentives, developing community orchards, encouraging walking and cycling.
- Understand the importance of not preaching climate action, but of meeting locally defined priorities with climate action as a co-benefit.
- Can act as mentors to the Big Local areas and be accessed in timely fashion by the partnerships when they need the support and expertise to form and progress their climate proof plans
- A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through all their practice and delivery work.

## Working with Local Trust and Big Local and the available budget

Residents involved in Big Local are supported in developing and delivering their plans through an extensive programme of training, networking and light-touch on the ground support, provided by Local Trust and our partners. The support we offer to Big Local areas is designed to reflect the priorities of Big Local areas, and the volunteer and resident-led nature of Big Local partnerships.

Our contracting processes aim to facilitate support being available in an on- demand and flexible manner, so that Big Local partnerships can access support at a pace and level that suits their needs. We recognise that this is unusual for contractors and Local Trust are committed to promoting support partner offers across the programme, while ensuring that areas do not feel pressurised to take up support.

Successful contractors will receive further information about our process, however it is worth knowing that work with areas is not guaranteed and is instead offered through the following model.

### Development time

Successful contractors will receive a fixed fee of £2000 to work with Local Trust and Big Local areas to develop your understanding of the Big Local programme and the in-area support to areas. There are set activities we expect providers to undertake during this time, such as

Item	Purpose	Led by
Meet the Partner event	Partner to introduce selves to Big Locals and get informal feedback to guide development of the support offer. Will be open to all Big Locals and recorded	Partner (Local Trust will organise the event and invite Big Local areas)

Finalising proposal	To finalise scope of the work and support offer	Partner
Contract agreement	To set out the terms and conditions of the partnership, co-signed by Local Trust and partner	Local Trust
Landing page content	To agree the wording for the website describing the support offer	Partner (Local Trust will provide a template)
Deep Dive training	To ensure partner understands the Big Local programme and the principles for support partners working with Big Locals	Partner must ensure staff involved in delivery and coordination attend (Local Trust delivers the training)

After this, support is offered to Big Local areas through two stages:

**Stage One: Local Trust supported work with Big Local partnerships:** Big Local areas can ‘try out’ working with the partner, through accessing up to three days of support. This first stage of support is fully funded by Local Trust. If the Big Local area wish to continue working with the support partner, they move into stage two.

**Stage Two: Match funded further work,** where the Big Local area are required to commit their own funding to the work. At this stage, Local Trust provides match funding of 50 per cent (there is a maximum Local trust match, depending on the partner).

Local Trust have allocated a budget of £30,000 for September 2021 through to September 2022 for the in-area support offer to be trialled (These amounts include VAT and all associated costs with the support). This includes the fixed development fee and available budget to resource stage one and two ‘on demand’ work with areas.

### **Learning and networking development and budget**

Local Trust have budgeted £10,000 (inclusive of VAT) for the peer learning and networking element of this work for September 2021 – September 2022. Partners will be able to charge a fixed fee to develop the programme (once they understand area need) and use the remaining available budget to deliver the associated events and activities.

We will review the budget in August 2022 and depending on the success of the initial contract, continued demand from Big Local areas, and agreement between parties, the contract may be varied or extended to run beyond September 2022.

## **Commissioning process and submitting an expression of interest**

Please see the timeline below outlining the commissioning process for this work.

Interested suppliers are asked to submit a short Expression of Interest (EOI) by email to Georgie Burr ([Georgie.burr@localtrust.org.uk](mailto:Georgie.burr@localtrust.org.uk)) in accordance with the timetable below, and outline the following:

- 1 - The contact details, including email address, of the person leading the application process from your organisation or partnership.
- 2 - A description for your organisation, or consortium/partnership. Please indicate any potential partners and your rationale for including them (max 300 words)
- 3 - The relevant experience your organisation or collection of organisations / freelancers have that would make you strong candidates for this role (max 400 words) Please refer to the eligibility criteria in your response.
- 4 - Where your organisation is based and your regional network spread. Please outline your capacity to travel across England and justify how your organisation would support work across England's regions. (max 300 words)
- 5 - To offer us an outline estimate of your organisations costs, please state the expected day rate for consultants delivering in area support to Big Local areas.

<b>Assessment criteria for EOI</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Strength of answers to Q1-5 in relation to requirements set out in Eligibility criteria section.	55%
<b>Team makeup and relevant experience (see criteria)</b>	35%
<b>Potential cost of provision</b>	10%

If you have any questions about this tender, please contact James Goodman: james.goodman@localtrust.org.uk

### Application timeline

<b>What</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Deadline for submitting expression of interest to Local Trust	Must be received by Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Supplier
Inform successful suppliers of invitation to submit a full	By COP Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> July	Local Trust



proposal		
Deadline for submitting full proposal	Must be received by 9am Monday 9 <sup>nd</sup> August	Supplier
Inform all applicants of decision to invite to interview or not.	By end of Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> August	Local Trust
Online interview	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> August	Supplier and Local Trust
Supplier appointed	By COP Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> August	Local Trust
Contract negotiation	Between 19 <sup>h</sup> August and 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Local Trust and supplier
Contract start date	October 2021	Local Trust and supplier

## Diversity and Inclusion

Local Trust takes diversity and inclusion seriously, and we want to partner with suppliers who share our commitment. We will ask you questions related to D&I as part of our invitation to tender processes.

## Accessibility

Local Trust is committed to ensuring that our ITT processes are accessible to everyone. If you have a disability or a chronic health condition, we can offer adjustments to the response format e.g. submitting your response in an alternate format. For support during the tender process, contact [Asimina.Vergou@localtrust.org.uk](mailto:Asimina.Vergou@localtrust.org.uk)

If, within the proposed work of this ITT, specific adjustments are required by you or your team which incur additional cost then outline them clearly within your commercial response. Local Trust is committed to evaluating all proposals fairly and will ensure any proposed adjustment costs sit outside the commercial evaluation.