



## Invitation to Tender

to conduct a feasibility study and produce a business plan for the creation of a community farm in Portobello

### Introduction

- 1) *PEDAL* -> *Portobello Transition Town* is seeking tenders to conduct a feasibility study and produce a business plan for the creation of a community-run farm in Portobello. This will be on land of around two acres in size, although it may comprise more than one site.

### Background

- 2) *PEDAL* -> *Portobello Transition Town* is a community-based organisation in Edinburgh that wants to help create a vibrant and sustainable Portobello. We believe that Portobello can and should reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, and thereby play its part in addressing climate change and preparing for the energy predicament that our society will soon find itself in. We believe that this can be achieved while at the same time increasing local resilience and improving quality of life, through a process of re-localisation. This means providing as many of the services and products we require as locally as possible. For example: generating our own energy; growing more of our food; re-using our waste; encouraging less travel and the use of more sustainable travel options; and providing more employment and leisure opportunities in Portobello.
- 3) 'Portobello Energy Descent And Land Reform Group' (*PEDAL*) was originally set up in 2005 as an unincorporated association. In January 2009, we established a not-for-private profit Company Limited by Guarantee (company number SC353557) and changed our name to *PEDAL* -> *Portobello Transition Town*.

- 4) In January this year, we received a grant from the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund, to enable us to develop and deliver an ambitious range of projects focussed on reducing energy use, increasing renewable energy generation, and raising the capacity of the community to grow more of its own food. The main aim of these projects is to enable Portobello to reduce its carbon equivalent emissions and to build local resilience in the face of Peak Oil. The development of a community farm is one of these projects.
- 5) PEDAL therefore wants to conduct a feasibility study and produce a business plan for the creation of a community-run farm in Portobello of around two acres (not necessarily at one site). By establishing the farm, PEDAL aims to:
  - Enable the local community to grow more organic food locally, thereby reducing carbon emissions associated with food production;
  - Build local resilience to Peak Oil by reducing reliance on food produced, packaged and transported with a high amount of fossil fuel input;
  - Build local community by bringing people together to share in and enjoy producing, preparing, exchanging and celebrating local food;
  - Create a viable local business, with all surpluses being invested in the farm or other local food projects.
- 6) This consultancy work will involve an assessment of the financial, organisational, legal and technical viability of different models of organic food production by local people and will estimate the amount of carbon emissions that could be saved. A particular challenge is the built-up nature of the area and therefore the shortage of, and limited access to, suitable land. If the investigations and business modelling show that the idea is viable and brings positive impacts for the environment and Portobello community, we will seek finance to implement it. A clear business plan will support us in this.
- 7) Some preliminary work has been carried out by PEDAL to identify a number of sites that could potentially be used for food growing. However this study is incomplete.
- 8) If developed, the farm would support the growing of fruit and vegetables, and potentially rearing of some types of animal, for local consumption. The farm might be managed by local households wishing to grow produce for their own consumption, or by PEDAL or another local community organisation to grow food for sale, donation or exchange within the community. It could also provide a site for future training and educational purposes.

- 9) PEDAL has an established Food Group, made up of local residents with an interest and experience in this area, who manage the Donkeyfield Community Orchard in Portobello and have an input to PEDAL's other food-related projects. The Group will support PEDAL staff in managing the consultancy contract, offering ideas and information at key points in the process.
- 10) In line with the Transition approach, and as a condition of our grant funding, it is important that local residents are involved throughout the research and that a participatory approach is used to identify local needs and aspirations and the most appropriate management model. We would also like to involve local people in the identification and mapping of potential sites as far as possible. We believe that community involvement in the project from an early stage is crucial in developing long-term community ownership of any future community farm.

### **Specific Requirements**

- 11) The primary requirement is to produce a feasibility report and business plan for a community farm in Portobello.
  - The feasibility report should assess the financial, technical, legal, and practical feasibility of establishing and running such a farm in this urban area. It should explore different models of community land management, as well as identify the carbon savings, if any, that might be associated with the farm.
  - The business plan should identify the key actions and timescales involved in establishing the farm, the costs and benefits associated with it, and the risks and critical success factors involved.
- 12) The specific work required is set out below:
  - Map land in Portobello that might be used for growing, involving local people, and identify land ownership and options for sale or lease
  - Identify preferred site(s) through an options appraisal
  - Research and appraise different models of community land use/management and test local interest in these
  - Research potential productivity and site design
  - Identify planning issues, such as in relation to change of use
  - Assess financial viability, carbon emissions savings, and technical feasibility (including water supply)
  - Produce a feasibility report and business plan.

## **Expected Outputs**

13) The required outputs are the production of a feasibility report and business plan for a community farm in Portobello.

## **Methodology**

14) Consultants are invited to propose how they intend to approach delivering the requirements set out above. However, we would expect the following activities to be included:

- Introductory meeting with PEDAL to discuss proposed ways of working, logistics, critical path, etc.
- Liaison with relevant stakeholders, such as City of Edinburgh Council, landowners, and local allotment associations
- Plans for involving local people in mapping of potential land
- Site visits to assess suitability including size, current use, and soil condition
- Appraisal of potential sites against key criteria
- Appraisal of case studies of successful community farms elsewhere
- Initial identification and appraisal of outlets for sale of the produce
- Financial modelling covering set-up plus forecasts for the first five years of operation
- Carbon budgeting via assessment of inputs, carbon sequestered at the farm, and carbon emissions saved through changes to consumption patterns
- Assessment of risks to the enterprise and identification of appropriate mitigation/ management strategies
- Analysis of the key skills required to run the farm successfully
- Identification of potential sources of finance
- Identification of likely timescales involved in establishing the farm, and key milestones
- Evaluating the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental context within which the farm will be established
- Regular face-to-face meetings with PEDAL staff and Food Group
- Regular progress reports to PEDAL

## **Key milestones**

15) The key milestones for the specified works are:

- End September 2010 - map potential land; identify land ownership and options for sale / lease; identify preferred site(s)
- End October 2010 - Research and appraise models of community land use / management and test local interest
- End November 2010 - Research potential productivity and site design; identify planning issues
- End January 2011 - Assess financial viability, carbon balance, legal and technical feasibility (including water supply)
- End February 2011 - Produce draft feasibility report and business plan
- Mid March 2011 - produce final feasibility report and business plan

## **Person/Organisation Specification**

16) Consultants should demonstrate the following in their tender submission.

- An excellent understanding of the financial, legal, technical and practical requirements of establishing and running an urban community farm
- A good awareness of existing and emerging organisational / management models for community-run farms
- Experience in having set up and run a community farm or similar project (this criteria is desirable rather than essential)
- A good understanding of community issues and a track record of working with communities to develop projects or businesses
- Knowledge of the planning system and land economy issues
- Knowledge / experience of financial modelling and the business development process
- Experience of carbon budgeting in relation to land projects
- An ability to work outside office hours and attend meetings with PEDAL's Food Group
- An ability to work in a collaborative manner and build a constructive relationship with all interested parties.

## **Guidance on tender submissions**

17) Tender submissions should contain the following information:

- Demonstration of how all elements of the tender will be met
- Details of relevant experience including examples of previous work
- CV's of individuals who will be involved in delivering the contract
- Information on how the contract will be managed. This should include:
  - Organisation chart (if appropriate)
  - Name and, if relevant, position of the individual who would have lead responsibility for delivering the contract
  - Professional liability insurance
- Daily rates for everyone expected to be involved in the contract
- Details of any other organisation to be involved in delivering this contract and the consultancy's relationship to them
- The proposed fee inclusive of all expenses.

## **Budget**

18) PEDAL has a fixed budget for the required works of up to £8,000. The successful tender will demonstrate how this budget may be best used in meeting the specific requirements of the brief.

## **Management**

19) The contract will be managed by Polly Cooke, Food Worker, PEDAL -> Portobello Transition Town.

Any questions regarding this tender brief should be addressed to Tom Black, Project Manager, at:

E-mail: [tom@pedal-party.org.uk](mailto:tom@pedal-party.org.uk)

Tel: 0131 258 4483

## **Tendering and selection process**

20) The deadline for submission of tenders is **12.30pm on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2010**. Tenders should be submitted in both hard and electronic copy, marked "**Portobello Community Farm Project**", and addressed to:

Polly Cooke  
 PEDAL -> Portobello Transition Town  
 Unit 1, The Stables  
 38 Baileyfield Road  
 Edinburgh  
 EH15 1NA

21)Tenders will be assessed the following week. Consultants may be requested to attend an interview in Edinburgh to discuss their submission on **Friday 6th August**.

22)PEDAL will confirm the successful consultancy by **Friday 6th August**.

23)PEDAL -> Portobello Transition Town reserves the right not to appoint any of the tendering consultants.

**PEDAL -> Portobello Transition Town**

**July 2010**