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**Invite to Tender - Content Creation, Social Media Advertising and Visit Herefordshire Website Management**

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**Section 1 - Introduction**

Herefordshire County BID Ltd (HCBID) is seeking to engage the services of a specialist agency with proven expertise in the design and delivery of strategic marketing campaigns and the back-office management of a tourism website. The overall objective of this project is to increase day visits and overnight stays in Herefordshire, through the promotion and development of the Visit Herefordshire brand.

**Section 2 – Background**

HCBID took on management of the Visit Herefordshire brand in January 2022. Visit Herefordshire was designed to reposition Herefordshire as a compelling visitor destination, supported by a website and a fresh visual identity.

In 2024, Visit Herefordshire was recognised as the official tourism site for the County which presents a rich and immersive experience for visitors. It features:

* Trip ideas like Food Safaris, Stargazing Guides, and Cultural Getaways.
* Scenic routes include The Herefordshire Trail, Cider Circuits, and Black & White Villages.
* Local guides to tourism hotspots within the region, such as Bromyard, Kington, Leominster, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye and Hereford City. Rural places in the County that attract significant numbers of visitors include the River Wye, Golden Valley and Symonds Yat.
* What’s On pages listing amazing events right across the County.
* Tourism business directory, listing business by category; supporting the visitor in fulfilling their needs.
* Activity listings, seasonal itineraries, and access to Visit Herefordshire Radio.

The site is praised for its visual storytelling, interactive itineraries, and easy navigation, making it a strong asset for promoting the County’s tourism offer.

**Section 3 – Economic Impact**

Herefordshire’s visitor economy presents significant growth potential, with tourism generating £773 million in 2024. The County’s rich cultural heritage, vibrant independent business community, and preservation of historic traditions all contribute to its unique character and appeal.

With two designated National Landscapes, a proud heritage, and a network of award-winning places to eat, stay, and explore, Herefordshire offers a compelling proposition as a premier visitor destination. Accredited by VisitEngland as a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) in 2024, we are now uniquely positioned to build on this momentum and further develop our ambitious vision for delivering a billion-pound tourism economy within the County in the next ten years.

**Overall Economic Impact (2024)**

* **Total Economic Impact**: £773.74 million (up 5.1% from 2023)
* **Direct Expenditure**: £578.61 million
* **Total Employment Supported**: 7,965 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), a slight decrease of 0.6% from 2023

**Visitor Numbers and Days**

* **Total Visitor Numbers**: 5.90 million (↑ 0.4%)
* **Total Visitor Days**: 8.05 million (↑ 0.3%)
* **Day Visitors**: 5.01 million (↑ 0.4%)
* **Staying Visitors**: 0.89 million (↑ 0.4%)

**Trends and Recovery**

* The tourism sector has shown strong recovery since the pandemic lows of 2020.
* Economic impact has grown steadily year-on-year since 2021, with a 35.3% increase from 2022 to 2023 and a further 5.1% increase into 2024.
* Visitor numbers and days have largely stabilised, with modest growth in 2024.
* Although the 2024 figures show small amounts of growth when compared to the rest of the West Midlands (14% decrease in overnight stays and 10% decrease in day visits) and other rural areas (6% decrease in overnight stays and 18% decrease in day visits), Herefordshire has really held its own.

Visit Herefordshire’s destination marketing and PR activity will deliver a stronger reputation as a quality visitor destination, appealing to new audiences and contributing to our wider regional economy. This is now a perfect time to start thinking about longer-term marketing proposals.

**Section 4 – Governance & Structures**

HCBID is a private, not-for-profit company established following a successful BID ballot in 2021. It is governed by businesses within the HCBID area, with a Board of Directors composed of representatives from levy-paying businesses. HCBID operates under a five-year mandate from 2022 to 2026, after which it must seek a further five-year term through a new ballot scheduled for October 2026. In April 2024, VisitEngland approved HCBID’s application to become a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP), marking a significant opportunity to collaborate across the County to promote Herefordshire’s tourism offer.

**Section 5 – Specification of services required**

HCBID is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced businesses to provide creative content, website management, and deliver paid for social media add campaigns to support the promotion of Herefordshire as a premier destination for tourism and leisure.

This tender invites agencies or individuals with a proven track record in destination marketing, digital storytelling, audience engagement, and website management to submit detailed proposals.

**The successful applicant will be responsible for**:

**Visit Herefordshire Website Management**

* Management of and updating existing VH website content
* Page design and creation.
* SEO optimisation of website content.
* Readability optimisation of website content.
* Management of the website back-office system.

**Visit Herefordshire Content Creation**

* Creation of engaging campaigns linked to Visit Herefordshire Marketing Plan.
* Production of high-quality written editorial and visual content that aligns with Visit Herefordshire’s brand values and shows a good understanding of what Herefordshire has to offer visitors.
* Commissioning and managing freelance contributors or photographers (when required).
* Creation of the monthly Visit Herefordshire Visitor Newsletter to be sent out on the first Saturday of each month.

**Meta Ads Campaign Management**

* Delivery of paid-for social media campaigns across Visit Herefordshire platforms (Facebook, Instagram) linked to Visit Herefordshire Marketing Plan.
* Management of the Meta Ads audience.
* Performance monitoring and individual reporting of each campaign.

**Deliverables**

* A comprehensive content strategy for 1 November 2025 until 31 December 2026 based on the Visit Herefordshire Marketing Plan.
* Monthly performance reports including metrics and analytics sent to the HCBID CEO by the 5 of each month.
* Communication and delivering marketing campaigns on time is essential to keeping on track between now and December 2026
* The appointed supplier will need to work closely with the HCBID appointed PR agency and the HCBID marketing team to deliver results in a timely manner.
* To activity take part in monthly marketing meetings with HCBID team and the appointed PR agency to coordinated cross sector working.
* What you expect to achieve with engagement, reach, and conversions.
* The appointed supplier will be required to report to HCBID Board. This includes a written Board report, attendance at the BID Board twice yearly to give a report in person and support for the Visit Herefordshire Tourism Conference.

**Outcomes**

* Enhanced brand recognition of Herefordshire as a destination for tourism, specifically offering high quality locally distinctive food and drink, cultural and rural activity experiences.
* Long-term increase in day and overnight visitors to Herefordshire (shown in the STEAM Report).
* Increased visitor spend within Herefordshire (shown in the STEAM Report).

**Section 6 – Conditions of Tender**

* We reserve the right to discontinue this tender process at any time and not award a contract.
* You will not be entitled to claim from us any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing and/or submitting your Tender at any stage of this exercise. This applies whether your organisation is successful or not.
* HCBID Ltd.’s Procurement Policy will be used to govern procurement and contract management. These arrangements will be confirmed on completion of the tender process. Please note that HCBID Ltd does not negotiate these standard terms as they are considered to be fair and reasonable.
* The price - a maximum budget is stated within this document. The total price submitted in the bidder’s response must not exceed this amount. Tenders over this amount will be rejected.

**Section 7 – Intellectual Property**

All content, creative assets, and materials produced as part of this contract shall be the exclusive property of Herefordshire County BID Ltd. The appointed supplier agrees that all intellectual property rights in any content created, including but not limited to written, visual, audio, and digital materials, will vest in and be owned by Herefordshire County BID Ltd upon creation. The supplier shall assign (or procure the assignment of) all such rights to Herefordshire County BID Ltd and shall not use or reproduce any of the materials for any other purpose without prior written consent.

**Section 8 – Budget**

**1November 2025 until 31 December 2026 – 14-month budget**

A maximum of £46,662 has been allocated to Content Creation / Website Management (exclusive of VAT).

A maximum of £11,676 has been allocated to paid-for social media advertisements (exclusive of VAT).

**Section 9 – Tender evaluation and Award Criteria -** Sets out the criteria that Herefordshire County BID will use to evaluate and award the tender

Proposals must demonstrate the following:

* Evidence of a clear understanding of the task.
* Evidence of a clear methodology outlining how you will approach the task, key milestones; timelines including dates for draft marketing report.
* Evidence of the skills and experience of the team delivering the project. The supplier should provide a dedicated points of contact to oversee the project, with overall responsibility for any issues.
* Examples of similar work.
* Evidence to show that proposed delivery will be within the budget and the stated timescales.

Tenders will be evaluated by assessing:

The Supplier Information Questionnaire - The bidders’ responses to the Supplier Information Questionnaire will be assessed on a compliant (pass) or non-compliant (fail) basis, except where a question is clearly stated as ‘for information only’.

HCBID Ltd will evaluate the tender using the following 3 criteria - quality, cost and social value. This helps to ensure that evaluations are as effective and fair as possible. Contracts awarded to tenders will be based on those offers that are the most advantageous to HCBID Ltd, based upon the following criteria:

* Quality 40%
* Cost 40%
* Social Value 20%

**Quality Criteria 40%**

The quality criteria will be assessed against a written submission outlining the process you would adopt for delivering the project brief set out above. The assessment criteria for the quality submission will be assessed against your responses to the following questions: -

* Company Profile - Please provide a brief overview of your organisation, including your core services, years of experience, and relevant clients.
* Team – Please provide an organisational chart
* Experience - Describe your experience in destination marketing, digital storytelling, and tourism-focused content creation. Include links or attachments to case studies or portfolio examples.
* Methodology and Approach - Outline your proposed approach to delivering the services outlined in the specification. How will you ensure alignment with the Visit Herefordshire brand and tourism strategy? How will you manage the content and ensure timely delivery of seasonal campaigns?
* Scheduling - What tools or platforms will you use for content scheduling, SEO optimisation, and analytics reporting?
* Content Creation and Management - Describe your process for creating high-quality written, visual, and video content. How do you ensure consistency in tone, style, and brand alignment? How will you manage freelance contributors or photographers, if required?
* Accessibility - What is your approach to accessibility and inclusivity in digital content?
* Website Management - Explain your experience with website content management systems.
* How will you ensure the website remains up-to-date, SEO-optimised, and user-friendly? What strategies will you use to improve readability and engagement on the Visit Herefordshire website?
* Social Media Campaigns - Provide examples of successful paid-for social media campaigns you have delivered. What platforms do you specialise in? How do you measure and report on campaign performance (e.g. reach, engagement, conversions)?
* Key Personnel and Team Structure - Who will be the main points of contact for this contract? Provide a summary of the team members who will be involved, including their roles and relevant experience.

**Cost Criteria 40%**

The budget criteria will be assessed against a written submission outlining the process you would adopt for delivering the project brief to the budget identified. The assessment criteria for the budget part of the submission will be assessed against your responses to the following questions: -

* Risk Management and Contingency Planning - What risks do you foresee in delivering this contract, and how will you mitigate them?
* How will you ensure continuity of service in the event of staff absence or technical issues?
* Budget and Value for Money - Provide a detailed breakdown of your proposed costs, including day rates, deliverables, and any third-party expenses.
* How will you ensure value for money throughout the contract period?
* Declarations and Compliance - Confirm that your organisation complies with all relevant data protection, accessibility, and procurement regulations. Declare any conflicts of interest or previous contract terminations.
* Confirm Public Liability and Professional Indemnity insurances

**Social Value Criteria 20%**

The social value criteria will be assessed against a written submission outlining how you would deliver social value.

Herefordshire County BID Ltd defines social value as: “The positive impact on local people, communities, local economy, and the environment by the way we spend Levy to buy goods and services.” In this context, it is the additional benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and contractual outcomes.

To assist HCBID in its delivery of social value, and to have it effectively considered and embedded, it is important to measure and recognise the overall value attained through social value outcomes, contributing towards greater local value for stakeholders across the County.

The assessment criteria for the social value submission will be assessed against your responses to the following questions: -

* Social Value and Local Impact - How will your work contribute to the local visitor economy and community?
* Can you demonstrate any commitments to local employment, sustainability, or skills development?
* How do you plan to engage with local tourism businesses and stakeholders?
* How what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area
* How, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

**Section 10 – Scoring Criteria for each question**

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| --- | --- |
| The scoring mechanism for scored questions will be detailed as follows unless stated otherwise. Score | Meaning |
| 0  | Unacceptable response. Requirement level is not met. Many important issues are completely un-addressed or response wholly inadequate or inappropriate. Concerns are serious and risk levels unacceptable for many areas.  |
| 1  | Poor response. Requirement levels are adequate for only some important issues. Some important issues are largely incomplete. Concerns are serious and risk levels unacceptable for some areas.  |
| 2  | Adequate response. Requirement level is partially met. Overall, the proposals are satisfactory, but some issues are weak. Risk levels apply but Bidder has demonstrated understanding of how they will meet all minimum requirements.  |
| 4  | Good response. Requirement level is partially met; competence is demonstrated in all areas but there is scope for more detail and more depth in some areas.  |
| 7  | Very good response. Requirement level is met with only a few minor weaknesses or queries. Competent bid demonstrating overall understanding of requirements and experience in all areas.  |
| 10  | Excellent response. Requirement level fully met. All key issues addressed. Range of examples of good practice, experience, understanding of requirements.  |

**Section 11 – Format & Content of Submission**

Guidance for the submission of tenders is as follows: -

* Submissions should be in MS Word or PDF formats and not exceed 10 sides of A4 or be smaller than font size 11.
* It is expected that submissions will set out how the requirements will be met, in terms of providing the desired services and within budget.
* Submissions should also provide a clear indication of how resources will be deployed and apportioned, including the necessary supporting systems and tools needed to fulfil the brief, factored into the overarching cost schedule.
* Brief overview of key personnel and their relevant professional experience and qualifications should be included.
* Measures and approach to managing/mitigating project risks should also be outlined.

**Section 12 – Submission Timeline** Sets out the intended timetable for this requirement

states the time and date by which the tender response must be returned

**Expressions of Interest -** If you are considering applying for this tender, please register your expression of interest to Diane Mansell, CEO of Herefordshire County BID Ltd, at diane@herefordshirecountybid.co.uk

**Questions or clarifications** - must be submitted to Diane Mansell, CEO of Herefordshire County BID Ltd, at diane@herefordshirecountybid.co.uk no later than **10 September 2025 11.59pm**. Questions and answers will be shared with all registered bidders.

**Deadline -** All tenders must be submitted electronically to Diane Mansell, CEO of Herefordshire County BID Ltd, at diane@herefordshirecountybid.co.uk no later than **21 September 2025 11.59pm.**