



Kindling a Community farm.

Invitation to Tender

To produce a feasibility study and concept design for Kindling Farm (farm house and farm buildings) via a process of co-design with our stakeholders.



Kindling Farm Introduction

Kindling Farm is a Community Benefit Society, owned by its 800 members.

In 2023 we purchased a 78 acre farm in Knowsley which we are turning into a pioneering agroforestry farm, focused on producing fruit and vegetables in a true example of wildlife friendly and low carbon farming.

We want to transform the farm into a thriving community hub, with a farm shop, cafe, facilities/accommodation for volunteers and visitors and a venue for a range of activities (from conferences for national organisations, to training for farmers, to wildlife workshops with schools). A crucial part of our aim and vision is to make the farm welcoming and accessible to our local communities, particularly to those underserved by environment and heritage projects.

To our delight the farm we have purchased to do this is a perfect example of a traditional Victorian farm with beautiful (though neglected) red brick farm buildings set around a cobbled courtyard.

This next exciting stage is to explore the feasibility of transforming our buildings into these facilities and to produce the concept designs, owned by our stakeholders, that will help us start turning our vision into reality. We are looking for an architect who is open to working with us and our communities to make this happen.

For more information please visit our website at: kindling.org.uk and our business plan can be found at: <https://kindling.org.uk/FarmBusinessPlan>

The work being commissioned

We have secured support from The National Heritage Lottery Fund to commission an architect to help us explore the feasibility of and produce concept designs for this exciting development. This work and these documents will then be used to present to our directors and wider membership as well as to be used in future funding applications to develop the site.

It is hugely important to us that the buildings are refurbished in a way that reflects and demonstrates our values - in the design, the materials and techniques used and in the process of development from start to finish. For us this means a design that:

- Is as ecological as possible and feasible - for us this is a wide ranging topic encompassing: sustainability of materials used in refurbishment and sustainability of the end use (from the heating system to the toilets); embodied and in-use carbon: and reaching standards such as AECB retrofit.
- Maintains, cares for and highlights the heritage of the farm and buildings
- Truly engages our communities so that they feel true ownership from the start, be that in the design process or being involved in training based construction.

Who we are looking to work with: We are looking for an ARB registered Architect-led team, to help us realise this ambitious project. The team would ideally include a Retrofit Coordinator and a Passivhaus Designer – or good experience of working on Retrofit/Passivhaus projects, as well as experience of working on heritage building projects and engaging stakeholders and communities

in the design process. All applicants must be able to demonstrate Professional Indemnity Insurance to an appropriate level as well as Public Liability and Employer's Liability.

The methodology of this work contains three elements:

- 1) **An initial feasibility report** to determine the potential of the site and buildings. This will explore:
 - a) the context of the site, including the physical constraints, local and national planning policy and environmental considerations (including topographic surveys of the site, ground investigation, building surveys and condition surveys of the buildings).
 - b) proposals for what can be achieved on the site, in the form of basic sketch options.
- 2) **Co-design process** building on the findings of the feasibility report including:
 - a) Presenting these initial findings to our Members & the wider community in an accessible manner.
 - b) Engaging our stakeholders in the co-design of the spaces, including discussions of the challenges and opportunities identified.
 - c) Working with us to identify potential training opportunities that could be a part of a future refurbishment process for us to then explore.
 - d) Working with us to collate feedback and ideas from stakeholders to feed into the next part of the process.
- 3) **A concept design** (including estimated costings) for developing four buildings (the farmhouse and three farm buildings) including pre-planning advice. We would want this process to include a range of our stakeholders via a process of co-design.

Our estimated timescale for this work is 3-4 months from engagement to completion of concept design.

Outputs

At the end of this commission we want to:

1. Have a community owned concept design for transforming our beautiful heritage buildings into future facilities of a thriving community farm.
2. Know if this collective vision is feasible: the suitability of buildings for facilities; work/cost of conserving the buildings heritage and the most ecological refurbishment.

This piece of work is part of a wider project that we will be delivering at the same time which has the additional but related objectives of:

3. Find out if our idea for running the refurbishment as a training programme is feasible with preferred options.

4. Develop a programme of activities to engage underserved people with heritage that we are confident is relevant and truly engaging.
5. Have engaged a wider range of communities.
6. Be a more resilient and sustainable organisation as a result.

Application Process

If you are interested in tendering for this work and would like to discuss it beforehand we would ask that you email us to arrange either a phone call with the Project Manager or a visit to Kindling Farm (we are available for visits on either Wednesday 19th or Tuesday 25th of February).

Tendering for the work:

The deadline for tenders is Friday 14th March at 5pm.

Your full proposal will need to include:

- A detailed methodology for undertaking all three elements of this tender.
- Experience, relevant skills and qualifications with regard to the refurbishment of heritage buildings.
- Experience, relevant skills and qualifications with regard to ecological refurbishment, renewable energy, energy conservation etc.
- Experience of co-design and community engagement.
- Details of staff allocated to the project, together with their experience.
- A proposed timescale.
- A Risk Register.
- An overall cost for the work - include a breakdown of each person who will be working on the project, what their day rate is and how many days each member of the team will be allocated to complete the work.
- Portfolio of previous work and two references.

Selection Process

We will evaluate all proposals using the following criteria:

- the degree of understanding of heritage conservation and ecological design
- the degree of understanding of the organisation's overall vision for the Farm and its broader environmental, social and economic aims.
- Openness and willingness to take on board a range of different ideas and to work in a

collaborative way with us and our stakeholders.

- the appropriateness of the proposed methodology and methods
- the degree of experience to complete the work
- how well the proposal can be delivered to the budget and timetable required

Contract Management

We envisage the work starting: April/May 2025 and completing by End of July/August 2025 and costing in the region of £28,500 (inclusive of VAT and expenses) with payments linked to specific milestones.

A funding schedule will result in 10% of funds being paid following a meeting to begin the work, 50% on completion of the feasibility studies and the final 40% on receipt of concept designs.

Kindling Farm's Project Manager will lead on managing the contract and payments will be made on formal approval of work by Kindling Farm's Board of Directors.

Payments will be made within 14 working days of an invoice being issued by the Architects.

Contact Details

Helen Woodcock, Project Manager: helen@kindling.org.uk

Website: <https://kindling.org.uk/Farm> and kindling.org.uk/News

Kindling.org.uk Facebook: [Facebook.com/KindlingFarm](https://www.facebook.com/KindlingFarm)

Farm Location: Netherley Road, Tarbock Green, Knowsley, L35 1QG - but please don't arrive without making an appointment by phone or email.

Deadline for tenders: 14th March at 5pm with the aim to decide on the winning tender early the following week (week commencing 17th March 2025)

