



INVITATION TO TENDER

Design and Build of Replacement Play Equipment and Additional Works, St Martin's Play Area

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1. Introduction

Cranbrook Town Council owns and is responsible for the management and maintenance of the St Martin's play area in Cranbrook. The play area includes a neighbourhood as well as a local equipped area of play (NEAP and LEAP) and was originally installed in 2014. Sadly, some of the timber play equipment has reached the end of its life already and the Council has concerns regarding the original preparation of the underlying ground and the original installation of the safety surfacing which displays evidence of erosion below the surfacing.

The St Martin's play area currently has the highest footfall among the Town Council's play areas and is attractive to families who attend the adjacent primary school, among other users.

The Council is looking to appoint a preferred supplier for the goods and works as set out in this invitation to tender document.

Any prospective supplier is invited to submit their design proposal(s) in accordance with the specification set out in this document to the Council.

2. Tender Process

Item	Date
Publication date of the contract notice and publication of tender documents	25 November 2025
Deadline for submission of tenders	25 January 2026 at 23:59
Evaluation of tenders (including any clarification questions to tenders)	From 26 January 2026
Notification to shortlisted applicants and invitation to presentation	By 2 February 2026
Presentations by shortlisted tenderers	Week commencing 9 February 2026
Evaluation Panel's Recommendation to Council	17 February 2026
Date of the full Council meeting	23 February 2026
Notification to applicants & contract award	24 February 2026
Construction works commencing	As soon as possible following contract award

Prospective contractors must ensure that they are completely familiar with the nature and extent of the obligations to be accepted by them before submitting a tender. Before submitting a tender, any prospective contractor is advised, at his/her own discretion, to visit the site to satisfy themselves as to the full extent of the contract specification. No claims arising from failure to do so will be accepted at a later date.

Any queries regarding the interpretation of any part of the contract documents should be addressed to the Clerk within the timescales indicated above.

The tender shall be submitted only on the attached tender form.

If, having examined the tender documents, prospective contractors wish to submit a tender they should fully complete and return the tender form by the specified deadline to

Cranbrook Town Council
FAO Janine Gardner, Town Clerk
Via email clerk@cranbrooktowncouncil.gov.uk

The Council invites the submission of electronic bids.

Tenders which are received after the deadline for submissions has passed will not be considered.

Prospective contractors should note that the Council is not bound to accept any particular tender. The Council's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into on the reasons which a tender has been rejected.

The successful tender together with the Council's written acceptance shall form a binding agreement in the terms of the contract documents.

Notes to Tenderers

- a) The prices to be included in the tender form are to be the full inclusive value of the work described, including all profits, costs and expenses, inflation and all general risks, liabilities and obligations, but excluding VAT (if applicable). No application from the contractor to adjust the contract price during the contract period for the works priced as part of this document will be considered.
- b) No alteration to the text of the tender form is to be made by the contractor tendering. Should any alteration, amendment, note or addition be made, the same will not be recognised and the reading of the printed schedule will be adhered to.
- c) The construction works have to be completed within a fixed term which prospective contractors are required to propose on the tender form. Save for force majeure, in the event of late completion of the contract, the total sum payable by the Council will be reduced by 2% for each week or part thereof during which the work is completed later than the agreed completion date [if applicable].
- d) Regular inspections will be carried out by the Council throughout the period of the contract to ensure the work is completed in accordance with the specification of works.
- e) Invoices presented for payment must include a schedule of the works completed including the dates of the work.
- f) Contractors are asked to contact the Clerk if any clarification is required.
- g) The Council reserves the right to make such enquiries as it sees fit regarding the suitability and experience of any tenderer.

3. Description of the Provision

The Council is inviting proposals for the refurbishment of the St Martin's play area which need to incorporate provisions for both a neighbourhood as well as a local equipped area of play (NEAP and LEAP) and their respective associated target age ranges and nature of equipment. The Council's vision very much is to create a flagship play area.

The play area includes hilly terrain.

The existing paths will be retained and the Council expects that the paths will work effectively with the to-be-installed adjacent safety surfacing. In another play area, path gravel kept migrating onto the safety surface (wetpout). In the same play area, the edge of the wetpour had not been secured effectively and could be lifted. The Council wishes to avoid a similar situation.

Proposals should include the following:

- Removal and disposal of the existing safety surfacing in its entirety
- Appropriate ground preparation and installation of safety surfacing (ideally wetpour)
- Installation of new, innovative and exciting play equipment to create a “wow” factor for this flagship play area
- The Council would welcome the creation of a theme in the play area and invites ideas; the town has been built previous agricultural land
- Removal and disposal of items of play equipment which have reached their end of life:
 - Timber crawl tunnel
 - Rowing boat
- Replacement of the basket (toddler) swings frame because of timber cracks wider than 10mm; the swings themselves remain fit for purpose
- Repair of rotting timber on the multi-play unit (tube slide); there is a significant number of wooden panels and boards which are rotting. The Council would also like to open the front panels, e.g. by slatting, to prevent having a closed-off area; N.B. Bidders are welcome to advise regarding the cost-effectiveness of this repair
- All drawings must be to scale

The Council will only install equipment with low maintenance requirements and as few moving pieces as possible.

The Council will only install equipment in either recycled plastic or non-rusting metal. Proposals for timber equipment will not be considered.

Prospective bidders should note that any works will need to avoid school holiday periods.

Prospective suppliers are invited to submit one or more designs for the goods and works to be delivered within the specified budget which must comply with British and European Standard (BS EN) for playground equipment and surfacing BS EN 1176, as well as BS EN 1177 which governs the depth of safety surfacing depending on the fall height of a piece of equipment.

Any submission and quotes for works shall include:

- compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)
- health and safety provisions, including Risk Assessment Method Statement (RAMS) documentation
- project management
- evidence of third party/public liability insurance with a sum insured of at least £10m
- employer liability insurance if applicable
- all labour costs and oncosts, including overnight accommodation, welfare provisions etc
- site security including overnight
- all preparatory works to the site

- groundworks
- all materials
- installation of the facility as defined above
- removal and disposal of items of play equipment and removal and disposal of safety surfacing
- any reinstatement works
- removal and appropriate recycling / disposal of all waste material

4. Considerations

Access

Access to the proposed location can be facilitated via the access road to St Martin's C of E primary school off Copseclose Lane, EX5 7DT. The site is publicly accessible.

Construction access will be facilitated via an existing maintenance gate to the site.

Care must be taken when approaching site. Any damage to existing paths will need to be remediated at the contractor's expense.

The successful supplier is likely to encounter members of the public during the works.

Work access times will need to avoid school drop-off and collection times.

The works should try and avoid school holidays and be carried out during term time if possible.

Defects Maintenance Period

The successful contractor will need to arrange at its cost a post-installation inspection (PII) by an independent play inspector.

The Council and the supplier will agree the works required to rectify any defects, including any identified in the post-installation inspection report, to ensure that the site complies with the specification set out in this document. Note: Risks and defects identified are required to be rectified at the supplier's cost.

A 12-month defect period shall commence from when all agreed findings have been rectified and signed off by the Council. On completion of the 12-month defect period the supplier will be required to repair or replace any items of play equipment or surfacing which show wear and tear over and above reasonable use of the area, i.e. where there is a design flaw or installation issue such as settlement.

Drainage / Ground Conditions

It will be the appointed supplier's responsibility to satisfy themselves that the ground is suitable for installation and drainage. The ground appears to feature a high clay content.

Health and Safety

All health and safety information must be submitted to the Council prior to works commencing on site. The supplier will need to be compliant with any site-wide working restrictions and on-site traffic management. Pre-construction information, including a method statement for the works to be carried out and evidence of competency among the workforce, will need to be supplied to the Council prior to any works commencing on site.

The supplier shall protect the public from the works and from any materials being transported to and from the working area.

At the end of each working day and at weekends the site must be left secure and lit as necessary. Appropriate signage for construction sites including contact details will need to be provided.

The site allows for good visibility and is well-used by members of the public for recreational purposes. The location is also sited along a walking/cycling route. For those reasons, the foot/cycleways must be kept free from obstruction at all times, with the exception of the path within the play area.

There are no trees with tree preservation orders on site.

The proposed site is not a protected site for wildlife/habitat considerations.

Public Relations

To the general public the supplier's employees working on the site are seen as the Council's. Each one of them is therefore a public relations officer and great care should be taken by the supplier in their personal instructions to the employees to make sure that they are all made aware of their responsibilities.

There should also be clear lines of communications to the Council on any complaints received from the public.

Reinstatement

The supplier shall be expected to leave the site in a clean and tidy condition upon completion of the works.

All adjoining footpaths will be swept clean throughout the contract period as necessary and any ground or hard landscaping disturbed due to the works will be restored back to its original condition.

Photographic evidence of the original site condition and the surrounding area will be taken to help avoid any future disputes.

Services

Every effort will be made to provide the supplier with service details prior to commencement on site from the relevant utility companies. As utility records are approximate and often incomplete, the supplier should follow guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for avoiding danger from underground services.

Standards

All equipment must be built and installed to the following standards:

British and European Standard (BS EN) 1176

British and European Standard (BS EN) 1177

Storage of Materials

A small compound may be erected on the site to store materials and equipment subject to the Council's approval.

Working Area

The supplier will be working in restricted areas and therefore care should be taken to avoid damage and keep any inconvenience to a minimum.

Proposals to ensure the security of the site during and out of working hours will need to be proposed by the contractor and agreed with the Council prior to works commencing.

Site security must be ensured at all times throughout the contract.

5. Budget

The budget for the delivery of the goods and works is **£160,000** excluding VAT.

6. The Site

A location plan is enclosed overleaf. The play area is located adjacent to St Martin's C of E primary school, EX5 7DT.



The site is publicly accessible.

7. Planning Considerations

Planning consent is not required.

8. Construction Period

The construction works should start on or as soon as possible after the award of a contract. All associated works including reinstatement of any damaged ground are to be completed within four months of awarding the contract, subject to adequate working conditions/exceptionally inclement weather delays (please refer to note c in the Notes to Tenderers above).

9. Evaluation Criteria

The following section defines the Council's method of evaluating the received tenders. Tenders will be evaluated in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations using the criteria and weighting below.

A tender evaluation panel will evaluate tenders based solely on the information provided in the tender form and its members will evaluate tenders in accordance with the process described below with the aim of establishing a preferred supplier for the Council's requirements and, if appropriate, submitting a recommendation to the Council to award a contract to the preferred supplier.

Confidential information relating to the evaluation will not be divulged to anyone outside the panel as to do so may undermine the integrity of the contract award process.

Decision-Making Process

All tenders will be checked for completeness and to ensure they are fully compliant. All complete and compliant tenders will then be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria in terms of their ability to meet the technical requirements specified.

Following the completion of all stages of the evaluation process, the panel will present its recommendation to the full Council. Only following approval from the Council will the bidders be notified of the decision, and confidentiality restrictions lifted from the contract details.

Evaluation Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated on the basis of the most economically advantageous proposal, using the following criteria. Each criterion has been assigned a weighting to reflect the relative importance of such criterion to the Council.

Criteria	Definition and Required Evidence	Weighting
Price	<p>The full and final cost over the full term of the contract, taking into account affordability and the commercial stability of a reasonable return for the supplier. Please submit evidence of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> your ability to carry out the contract to the proposed design and specification and within the stipulated budget <input type="checkbox"/> your financial and/or operational capacity to deliver the contract, <input type="checkbox"/> your last year's audited accounts. <p>N.B. If you are unable to provide audited accounts you may provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A statement of the turnover, Profit and Loss Account/Income Statement, Balance Sheet/Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flow for the most recent year of trading for this organisation, or (ii) A statement of the cash flow forecast for the current year and a bank letter outlining the current cash and credit position, or (iii) An alternative means of demonstrating financial status if any of the above are not available 	50%
Quality	<p>The supplier's ability to perform the contract to the highest standards. Please submit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> evidence of your knowledge in and experience of carrying out similar contracts or other relevant evidence during the last five years, <input type="checkbox"/> two references from recent customers of similar works. 	25%
Timeframe	<p>The supplier is required to complete all works within a fixed term, a proposal for which should be made by the applicant on the tender form.</p>	10%

Compliance	Evidence of the contractor's compliance with all Health & Safety, employment laws and regulations and safeguarding procedures, e.g. by submitting a relevant policy(ies).	10%
Environmental Issues	Evidence of the contractor's approach to environmental issues and how you will manage the disposal of waste, e.g. by submitting a relevant policy(ies).	5%