

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL  
INDEPENDENT CONSULTANCY CONTRACT  
FOR  
BEXHILL WILD DOMESDAY PROJECT

Between

David EP Dennis BA (Hons) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and

Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council

Period of Contract: 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025

Contract Payment Dates: The first day of each month

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Contract Payments:

1 June 2024: E825.00

1 July 2024 and each month of contract thereafter: £825.00

Total contract cost: £9 900.00

Contract Supply

David EP Dennis is appointed as Bexhill Wild Domesday Project Manager. He will provide the following implementation of Phase 2

This begins in the summer of 2024.

- a) Once the Bexhill Wild Domesday Year One report is finalised and approved by Bexhill Town Council, then the recommendations of the report can be implemented in a logical order.
- b) Key aspects will be:
  - Holding public meetings to encourage volunteering.
  - Organising the volunteers to patrol their wards and feedback on findings.
  - Conserving pollination through the provision of wildflower meadows and borders.
  - Providing small areas within woodland and open land where water for insects, birds and mammals can collect during rainfall.

- Planting of hedgerows and trees. With regard to tree types and hedge types, the pattern should follow the County Ecologist's recommendation with high numbers of blackthorn, hawthorn, and holly for winter berries for birds and to provide dense nesting areas for them too.

Grant bids will be made to cover costs.

### Website

Total payments to renew the Project website, its domain name and email address on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, and again on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, will cost €758.44. This will be paid by the Project Manager.

The website contract with Wix will feature, progressively, from April 2023:

- A wide range of photographs and information about the project and its progress within each ward.
- A list of all wildlife and landscape conservation organisations who have agreed to participate in the project research.
- Details of the East Sussex County Council Local Nature Recovery Strategy as it affects Bexhill - please see:  
Local Nature Recovery. Strategies: how to prepare and what to include - Defra Citizen Space
- An electronic online ward map for the project website has been developed by BexhillOSM Maps. This includes: (1) All woods and water courses, (2) Flood risk areas (3) Ward streets (4) Tree preservation orders.
- A set of free PDF information and education leaflets for the public to download, covering the 30 research aspects detailed in Appendix A to this contract.
- A leaflet for schools to show the Project's relevance to learning about conservation. ● A PDF copy of the 3-monthly report to the council (see above) subject to confidentiality of content.

All design elements, photographs, and leaflets on the website or in print remain the copyright of David EP Dennis.

### Insurance

David EP Dennis will pay for and hold public liability and professional indemnity insurance policies commencing cover on 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025. No claim against any policy will be permitted or accepted for any project research work or co-operation prior to 1 June 2023. All previous work including writing, meetings, presentations, walking journeys around each ward, and website photography and design for the last two years (2022-2023) was given free of charge.

### Income Tax

David EP Dennis undertakes to pay his own income tax for the project fees received.

### Contract Duties of the Council

Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council will:

- Act in a positive and encouraging manner towards the project throughout its duration and accept the rationale set out in Appendix B.
- The Town Clerk and nominated officer for project liaison who will make themselves available at a reasonable time and location for meetings and discussions concerning all aspects of the project.
- Receive recommendations for future projects and funding from the Project Manager to be considered.
  
- Review the work of the project manager regularly.
  
- Check the insurance policies of the project manager.
- Be willing to read the four major seasonal reports described above and look at the project website and electronic mapping information.
- Make the relevant officers available to meet with representatives of ESCC, Rother District Council, the Environment Agency and other organisations listed below in Appendix C if appropriate.
- Be willing to consider procedural or structural changes to their policies where they consider that it is in the best interests of Bexhill's wildlife and landscape conservation and enhancement.
- Be open to listening to key information on climate change, sea level rises, wildlife, and landscape matters as these may affect the town, without voicing or seeking to apply any political dimensions which may prevent the scientific results from supervening purely politically driven policies.

#### Appendix A

#### Project research areas:

- (1) Mammals
- (2) Birds
- (3) Reptiles & Amphibians
- (4) Fish
- (5) Insects that are butterflies or moths
- (6) Other insects, spiders
- (7) Molluscs, terrestrial land freshwater crustaceans, seashore crustaceans, other terrestrial and freshwater invertebrates, other seashore invertebrates
- (8) Trees and shrubs
- (9) Wildflowers
- (10) Grasses, rushes, sedges, lower plants, fungi

- (11) Climate overview
- (12) Weather records for Bexhill
- (13) Sea Levels, Tidal and Coastal Conservation
- (14) Coastal assets
- (15) Rainfall trends
- (16) Humidity records
- (17) Ground Water levels and flooding risks
- (18) Landscape types and definitions
- (19) Farming
- (20) Roads and streets per ward
- (21) Parks and Gardens
- (22) Natural water courses
- (23) Sewage and drainage
- (24) Private Gardens
- (25) Dark Skies & Light pollution
- (26) Food chain survival water
- (27) Drought and Cyanobacteria
- (28) Air Quality
- (29) Landscape pollution and Fly Tipping
- (30) Bathing Water Quality

## Appendix B

### Project Rationale

Humanity's existence depends on plants and animals. The food chain needs to be intact for a healthy biosphere. Bexhill cannot escape from the implications of climate change and sea level rises, so we need a plan to ensure our local future.

On 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 Bexhill Town Council unanimously approved Year 1 of the Bexhill Domesday Project without a formal commitment to Years 2 and 3.

However, the whole point of Year 1 is to obtain the information and guidance for Years 2 and 3. Therefore this contract needs to be seen as building a platform for future action by the council. It is accepted that although the Climate Committee has voted to extend the contract to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025, the council may not vote to continue the project in 2025/6.

Nevertheless, the Project Manager advocates that a three-phase approach to the conservation of Bexhill's wild and plant life and landscapes, involving young people, residents and experts working together, is the best way ahead for the Town Council.

The Bexhill Wild Domesday Plan will conform to the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Responsible Authority Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for the county.

The various data parameters to be investigated in Year 1, are shown in Appendix A. How data will be obtained was detailed in the council voting document for the project which was accepted in its entirety on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

Year One - The Project has begun comprehensive scientific evaluation phase, identifying the types of landscape and ecology we have within the nine Town Wards: Central, Collington,

Kewhurst, Old Town, Sackville, St Mark's, St Michael's, St Stephen's, and Sidley. If we do not know what nature there is in Bexhill, we cannot preserve it. The assessment of Bexhill's plant and wildlife and natural environment will be divided into four seasonal research tranches — Summer 2023, Autumn 2023, Winter 2024, Spring 2024. Funding bids will be made to cover Year 2 project funding.

Year Two - Using the data obtained from multiple sources in Year 1, then recruiting a team of 18 volunteers (two per ward) from interested residents including young people. The team would then conduct street-by-street and landscape surveys looking for problems in trees, plant types, wildlife, coastal areas, streams, water courses and pollution of the environment. These volunteers would be trained using the same training methods as Sussex Wildlife Trust use for their own wardens.

Under supervision from experts, including Dr Barry Yates, former manager of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve and current manager of the Wetland Trust, a conservation management phase would be planned, using the Bexhill Wild Domesday Survey data and volunteer local ward data as a base, to ensure relevant planting and landscaping, and additional water in the landscape for animals, insects, and tree survival in drought conditions. The project already works with iRecord and the National Biodiversity Network to obtain records of all wildlife records for Bexhill-on-Sea.

If Year 1 & 2 are successful and the council is minded to vote for Year 3 then:

Year Three - An evaluation phase which searches for successes and problems to make any necessary revisions to long-term strategy. This project would have aspects which could attract match funding from external sources such as East Sussex County Council grants programme, the National Lottery, the Environment Agency, and some of the local charities supporting green issues. Some bids will be made in Year 1 to ensure funding for Year 2.

## Appendix C

### Liaison with Organisations

The Project manager will be free to contact the following organisations and persons without prior reference to the council.

Several organisations are already working on conservation in our town, including Bexhill Environmental Group, Friends of Combe Valley, Combe Valley Nature Facebook Group, Hastings and East Sussex Natural History Society, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Sussex Ornithology, Sussex Bat Group, Bexhill Heritage, Bexhill Maritime Group, Mantel Farm Bees. However, it is the Environment Agency, East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council who have primary responsibility at present for the local environment.

To these organisations must be added the many landowners and residents who also need to be consulted before the Bexhill Wild Domesday Plan can be implemented. Some of Bexhill's current environmental organisations have carried out their own small surveys and these would be considered when assessing the overall picture of wildlife and landscape issues.

Furthermore, it may be necessary to open discussions or consult with Sussex University, Southampton University, the Meteorological Office and the British Oceanographic Institute and similar national organisations to obtain key climate data.

Copy of agreement approved by Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council for year 2 only.

BEXHILL-ON-SEA WILD DOMESDAY PROJECT

Application for permission to bid for external funds.

This project began on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 and is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 unless continuance to 2025/6 is agreed. The overall project is designed for three years of landscape and wildlife evaluation, conservation and enhancement In the nine wards of the town.

This submission to the Climate Committee is asking for agreement to bid for external funds for the following projects, all of which have already been agreed during three hours of talks with the Cllr Doug Oliver, Leader of Rother District Council, and the Environment Adviser Dr Lucie Bolton for implementation within Bexhill-on-Sea in principle.

This application for project approval does not require any money from the Town Council.

David EP Dennis BA (Hons) [REDACTED] RAF

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

## EXTERNAL PROJECT FUNDING

The results of the research have been presented to Rother District Council. In the three hours of formal meetings with Rother DC they have approved the project bid areas and concepts. Updates have been sent to all councillors. A slide presentation will be given for 15 minutes on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

The following projects that cover: Drought, Environment and Sea Level Rise have been approved by Bexhill Town Council's Climate Committee. In liaison with the East Sussex County Council Grants Manager, funding bids will be made to pay for the project through external grants.

### Drought

- Purchase of water bowsers of various types:  
1 x 110 litre @ 1336.00 each). 9 x Hitchman roll-along water bowser 40 litre @ 140.00 Total cost: L696.00
- Free water butts for residents: 100 x {33.50 = L3,350.00
- Enhanced water catchment to Gillham Wood and Collington Wood: Clay puddled ponds. 2x ,000.00

### Environment

- Improvements to the flow and ecology of Sidley Stream.

Volunteers would clean the landscape. A leaky dam made of logs and wicker would be placed at an appropriate location. Cost — nil, Wood to be provided by Friends of Combe Valley. Planting of snowdrops, English bluebells and other flora by community volunteers.

- Hedging and larger shrubs — 1,000 metres of new hedging spread through the nine wards. Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Holly, Blackberry, Ivy, Buddleia: Woodland Trust grant for hedging of up to 250 metres — free. Otherwise around L1 .08 Per plant. 4 plants per metre - So 1,000 metres of hedge plants for planting during 2024/5 = 750 x L1 .08 = 1810.00 x 4 = 13,240.00
- Free pollinating plants for residents as per the PDF on the project website. L1,000.00 ● Bat boxes and bird boxes: Bat = 9 boxes @ L10.00 per box: Bird — 6 Barn Owl and large bird @ 140.00. Can be made by Friends of Combe Valley in their woodland workshop for a donation: say {500.00.
- Grants for local volunteer organisations such as Bexhill Environmental Group and Friends of Combe Valley, Gillham Wood and Collington Wood, to help with woodland and path clearance. {250.00 per organisation. Cost L1,000.00

### Sea Level Rise

- Robust canvas panels for protecting the sea front from shingle and wave damage in winter. This is a costed option but the final decision rests with Rother District Council (see their note below).



Costs as follows:

One panel 6feet 10 inches wide and 5 feet eight inches high = 32.92 20

panels = {592.43

133 panels = L4,261.32

Project manager recommends buying 20 panels for testing of concept to be used on railing for 1 winter. If it keeps stones off sea front, then implement full set of canvas in 2025/2026.

Total Cost of all bids to be spent in 2024/5:

Drought: £6046.00

Environment: £5,740.00

Sea Level: £592.43

Total Project Bid: £12,378.43

Response from Rother DC:

Dear David,

Thank you very much for the additional details of your proposals. For the purposes of the Town Council, I understand you need some level of reassurance that RDC is supportive.

Rother District Council support the majority of your proposals as being aligned to our own climate and environmental ambitions. Where required, RDC will seek to grant access to our lands, on a case-by-case basis, subject to further details for each part of the project and necessary safety information is provided.

In relation to your Sea Level Rise project\*, the lack of information provided gives me slight cause for concern as the matter of shingle movement on Bexhill beaches is one that needs to be carefully managed. I reserve judgement on this scheme pending further information regarding the actual Interventions to be undertaken, understanding the proposed benefit, and consultation with the EA and residents.

I would also be Interested In seeing any monitoring and evaluation that takes place during this project, as it may help feed into our own climate strategy going forward.

I thank you for your hard work on these issues and wish you all the best In attracting funding.

Kind regards Ben

Ben Hook

Director — Place and Climate Change

So far, the Domesday project manager David EP Dennis has interacted with the following organisations (in alphabetical order):

- Bexhill OSM - Mapping
- Bexhill on-Sea Town Councillors
- Dark Skies
- De La Warr External Affairs Manager
- 0 East Sussex County Council
- Environment Agency Headquarters (EV)
- Friends of Combe Valley
- Groundwork South, Combe Valley CIC Managing agent.
- Hastings & East Sussex Natural History Society
- Hydrodynamics Project Manager, Channel Coastal Observatory, National Oceanography Centre
- Minister of Transport Huw Merriman MP
- National Biological Network
- Natural England
- Pevensey to Eastbourne EV Coastal Management Service

- Safe Sea Water Swimming
- Southampton University
- Southern Water
- Studio Brio Environment Consultancy
- Sussex Police
- Sussex Wildlife Trust
- United Nations Climate Committee
- Upper Wilting Farm
- Wetland Trust
- Woodland Trust

Final Signatures

The Project Manager undertakes to do his level best to answer all questions from councillors and the public. He also undertakes to produce quality reports and to liaise with local and national organisations in a professional manner.

Bexhill Town Council undertakes to act in an open and positive manner towards this project.

Contractor Signed [REDACTED]

On [REDACTED] (Date)

David EP Dennis BA (Hons) [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]

Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council Signed... [REDACTED]

On. . [REDACTED] ..(Date)

By

[REDACTED] (Name & Initials)

For Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council.

This contract is legally binding.

