# Invitation to Tender: To survey and remove coins lodged in the Giant’s Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site

1. **Introduction**

It has become evident in recent years that visitors to the Giant’s Causeway World Heritage Site (WHS), have been inserting coins between joints and fractures in the basalt columns. This activity started approximately 20 years ago, however, it is only in the past ten years that the activity has become considerably more widespread, and only after the COVID pandemic that it has become clear to all stakeholders that this activity is causing an unacceptable level of damage. Once inserted, the coins corrode in situ, delaminating, expanding and causing staining and discolouration of the basalt columns. Visitors have also been observed using loose rock from the site to hammer coins into joints.

Following research and expert advice, funding has been awarded to run a pilot project to map, survey and remove coins from test sites, determining conservation thresholds and establishing a monitoring programme within the World Heritage Site. Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT), in collaboration with the National Trust (landowner of the Giant’s Causeway) and on behalf of the WHS Steering Group, are seeking suitably qualified and experienced companies or individuals to complete these works.

# Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust (CCGHT) was established in May 2002 as a public/private/voluntary sector partnership body and is a registered charity. To read more about CCGHT visit [www.ccght.org](http://www.ccght.org).

CCGHT has acted as Secretariat to the WHS Steering Group for 15 years. The CCGHT team work collaboratively with the National Trust, WHS Steering Group members and local communities to increase local understanding and benefit from the international designation, while safeguarding the international designation and enhancing the environment.

CCGHT is the contracting organization on this project.

# Background to the project

The Giant’s Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS was inscribed in 1986 under criterion vii and viii. Columnar basalt, namely the Grand Causeway, inscribed under both these criteria. Visitors have been inserting coins in the joints and fractures in the basalt columns and boulders at the Giant’s Causeway. It is unclear when this behaviour began, but it is presumably based on superstition or the leaving of mementos and is further exacerbated by copy-cat actions. Once inserted, the coins corrode in situ, delaminating, expanding and causing staining and discolouration of the basalt columns. Visitors have also been observed using loose rock from the site to hammer coins into joints. This behaviour is largely contained to the high footfall area of the Site (the Grand Causeway and two near-by boulders).

WHS’s represent parts of cultural and natural heritage of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of mankind. A sustainable, conservation-led approach to WHS protection is encouraged.

The Site Managers, NIEA and the WHS Steering Group are committed to safeguarding the key attributes and integrity of the WHS as set out in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (see Appendix One). Therefore, we seek to remove the coins and to discourage the activity.

To better understand the impacts of the activity and inform themselves of suitable mitigating/conservation/removal activities, the WHS Steering Group have sought advice from Queen’s University Belfast and British Geological Survey (reports are available in Appendix Two and Appendix Three). Furthermore, in early 2024 Cliveden Conservation were contracted to carry out initial test removal of coins (report is available in Appendix Four).

In summer 2024, the National Trust established the Coin Deposition Project Advisory Group (CDPAG). The group is comprised of the National Trust’s General Manager, Regional Conservator and Nature Engagement Officer; the Northern Ireland Environment Agency’s (NIEA) Principal Scientific Officer and Earth Science and Heritage Officer; Professor Andrew Cooper from Ulster University, a coastal specialist who sits on the National Trust’s Natural Environment Advisory Group; Dr Kirstin Lemon from Geological Survey Northern Ireland and the Steering Group Secretariat; Dr Jennifer McKinley from Queen’s University Belfast; Esther Dobbin, Region and Investment Manager at Tourism Northern Ireland, a representative from Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and representatives from CCGHT.

CCGHT have been working within the WHS framework to inform relevant organisations of the damaging activity and will continue to update them throughout this project.   
In September 2024 the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) awarded CCGHT funding to take forward a scaled-up pilot. Details of required activities are outlined in sections below.   
  
National Trust are collaborating with CCGHT on this project. CCGHT will lead communication with the Steering Group and CDPAG. National Trust are landowners and will facilitate access, seek consent from NIEA for the outlined works on designated land\* and lead a communications campaign to discourage visitors from carrying out the damaging activity. Further details are outlined in sections below. For information on the National Trust, please visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)   
  
*\*Such is the importance of the natural environment at the WHS that statutory and non-statutory designations have been applied to land within, and running beyond, the WHS boundary. These designations provide further protection for the WHS.*

* *North Antrim Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)*
* *Giant’s Causeway National Nature Reserve (NNR)*
* *Giant’s Causeway & Dunseverick Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)*
* *Skerries and Causeway Marine Special Area of Conservation (Marine SAC)*

Bidders must comply with conservation measures requested by NIEA, as detailed in the letter of consent.

# Aim and Objectives of Coin Pilot Removal

The aim of this project is to better understand the extent of coin deposition, the degree of difficulty in removing the coins and the minimum level of damage that is likely to occur if they are going to be removed.

Objectives:

* Complete site survey resulting in a detailed map quantifying the linear length of joints and cracks affected by coin insertion.
* Identify 10 x 1m test sites (including the boulders site).
* Carry out removal of easily removeable coins across all affected areas, and careful removal of all coins on 10 metres of joints at the test sites.
* Track effort/method required to remove coins, producing a report.
* Create a guide for removal practices, informed by clear conservation practices, setting out parameters and thresholds for impact on the stones.
* Develop a monitoring programme, informed by stakeholders’ input. Including training of someone(s) local in conservation led coin removal.
* Provide a project report noting key activities completed, findings and recommendations. Share this with the Steering Group at an in-person meeting.

Note, National Trust plan to film part of the mapping and removal activities as part of the public messaging campaign.

# Project Outputs

The key project outputs will include high-quality **written reports and maps** covering all the objectives outlined in Section 5, supported with:

* illustrative materials
* photographs
* maps (must be presented in both PDFand GIS shapefile formats)

The written reports, maps and activity plans must be provided in digital format e.g. Microsoft Word and PDF.

# Copyright, Data Protection and Confidentiality

All materials provided to the successful applicant will remain the property of the contributing organisation(s) and individuals. Copyright for materials will become the property of CCGHT for free distribution to partners, the public and funders.

# Key Dates

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| **Date** | **Phase** | **Action / Activities** |
| Friday 18th October 2024 | Invitation to tender circulated |  |
| Wednesday 6th November 2024 | Deadline for submission of proposals | Applicants must submit proposals by 12 noon on Wednesday 6th November 2024 |
| Monday 11th November 2024 | Assessment of submissions.  Notification of decision | Submissions will be scored. Applicants may be invited to an online interview |
| W/C 11th November 2024 | Project Initiation Meeting (online) | The successful applicant will meet with the CCGHT/National Trust team to agree a work programme |
| Friday 7th March 2025 | Completion of site work and final report | The successful applicant will complete site work and hand over final report |

# What is required in the submission

The submission must evidence the criteria below. Failure to do so will invalidate your submission:

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| A detailed, timebound, clear and costed methodology that ensures objectives outlined in Section 4 are met. |
| Evidence of the skills of the applicant(s) including a portfolio of relevant work. |
| A breakdown of project personnel, the activities they will be responsible for and contact details for the project lead. |
| Evidence of insurance. Minimum requirements for this contract are:  1. Employers liability: Statutory minimum £5,000,000  2. Public liability: Minimum £5,000,000 |
| A clear breakdown of project costs including VAT. |
| Contact details for two referees who have knowledge of your work. |
| The submission must be no longer than eight A4 pages using font size 12. Evidence of  previous work is not included in this page allowance. |

# Scoring Criteria and Weight

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Score** | **Weighting** | **Max points** |
| Evidence of the skills of the applicant/s | Evidence of skills required to conduct conservation works at designated locations. | 0-5 | 6 | 30 |
| Evidence of skills required to complete surveying, conservation works and training. | 0-5 | 4 | 20 |
| Proposed methodology | Present a clear and realistic project methodology demonstrating approach to achieving project targets and delivering outputs | 0-5 | 5 | 25 |
| Total costs | Cost - including a clear breakdown of costs including daily rates, number of days, VAT and other proposed expenses (mileage paid at 45p/mile) | Under this criterion, the lowest acceptable tender price is awarded the maximum of 25 points. Second lowest awarded 20 points, third lowest will be awarded 15 points etc. | | 25 |
|  | | **Max score** | | 100 |

# Budget

The maximum budget for this project is £20,000.   
Proposals must include all fees, travel, direct and indirect costs, expenses, and VAT.

A 50% payment may be requested at project initiation, with the remainder paid upon delivery of satisfactory work.

CCGHT does not bind itself to accept the lowest priced or indeed any proposals submitted. The contract will be awarded to the most advantageous submission based on an assessment of the criteria outlined above. Proposers will not be compensated for costs associated with the production of the tender document.

# Amendments

Should this request to tender need to be amended all recipients of the documents will be notified simultaneously. If deemed appropriate the deadline for receipt of tenders will be extended.

# Contact Information

If you have any queries, please contact Nikki Maguire [nikki@ccght.org](mailto:nikki@ccght.org).

# Submission

**The closing date for return of proposals is 12 noon on Wednesday 6th November 2024.**

Email: Title your email Causeway Coins ITT and send it to [nikki@ccght.org](mailto:nikki@ccght.org). Please send all documents as attachments. These will not be opened until the deadline has passed. Applicants are responsible for ensuring emails have been received before the deadline.

To access Appendices please click each title below or visit <https://ccght.org/resources/> and find them posted at the end of the page.

**[Appendix One: OUV statement](https://ccght.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/AppendixOne_SOUV.pdf)**

[**Appendix Two: QUB report**](https://ccght.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/AppendixTwo_QUBReport.pdf)

[**Appendix Three:**  **BGS report**](https://ccght.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/AppendixThree_BGSReport.pdf)

[**Appendix Four: Cliveden Report**](https://ccght.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/AppendixFour_ClivedenReport_Feb2024.pdf)