



Invitation to Tender – Communications & Publicity Lead (Otley 800)

Introduction

Otley Town Council is looking to appoint a Communications & Publicity Lead to plan and deliver communications for Otley 800, an upcoming celebration marking two significant milestones in the town's history.

2027 is the 800th anniversary of the oldest surviving mention of Otley Market and 2028 is 800 years since the first part of the current Otley Bridge was built. To commemorate these significant dates, the town will put on a year-long series of events - the majority community organised but including four significant projects organised either by the Council or by our partners.

Funding will come from Otley Town Council and from a successful National Lottery Heritage Fund Bid.

The Communications & Publicity Lead will play a central role in ensuring the programme is clearly communicated and well-attended throughout its duration.

Tender Documents

This tender includes the following information to enable you to produce a scheme for submission. Please contact us if anything is unclear or you have further questions.

1. Contract Objective
2. Explanation of the role
3. Working within Guidelines
4. Compliance, Insurance and Legal Issues
5. Budget & Payment Schedule

1. Contract Objective

The objective of this contract is to plan, coordinate and deliver a clear, consistent and engaging communications programme that builds awareness of Otley 800 locally and regionally. It should also encourage participation from community organisations and audiences, support the promotion of individual events and projects, reflect the heritage significance of the programme (particularly Otley's commercial and trading history), ensure consistent messaging across all channels and stakeholders, and provide value for money for residents and funders.

2. Explanation of the role

The successful contractor will undertake a hands-on role that combines strategic oversight alongside day-to-day delivery, reporting directly to the Programme Manager.

They will refine and implement a practical communications plan for Otley 800, align messaging with agreed themes including Otley's market and trading heritage, and adapt communications activity in response to programme developments.

They will create and deliver content across multiple channels, including writing and distributing press releases and media updates, managing and updating website content, producing email communications, and planning and delivering social media activity either directly or in coordination with partners. All communications should be clear, accessible and appropriate for the intended audience.

They will work closely with community groups to support the promotion of their events, providing guidance on messaging, timing and channels, ensuring consistency across multiple contributors and organisations, and acting as a central point of coordination for publicity activity.

They will use existing relationships with local and regional media (or nurture such relationships quickly), secure coverage for key milestones and events, and identify opportunities to raise the profile of Otley 800 beyond the immediate area.

The contractor will provide simple, bi-monthly updates to the Programme Manager, track reach, engagement and participation where appropriate, and adjust activity based on performance.

3. Working Within Guidelines

The contractor will be expected to adhere to agreed Otley 800 branding and tone of voice, work collaboratively with the Programme Manager, Otley Town Council, project partners and

other stakeholders, maintain flexibility in response to evolving plans and funding outcomes, and ensure all communications are accurate, timely and appropriate.

4. Compliance, Insurance and Legal Issues

Otley Town Council will retain Intellectual Property rights to all content created under this contract upon payment. The contractor must comply with GDPR and relevant data protection legislation. Content must meet the accessibility standards to which Otley Town Council must adhere to where applicable, including the use of alt-text and clear formatting. The contractor will be responsible for ensuring they have appropriate insurance, including Public Liability Insurance to a limit of not less than £5 million.

5. Budget & payment schedule

The indicative budget for this contract is £15,600, the role includes the initial creation of the comms strategy and development of the brand voice, with remaining work split evenly over the course of the contract which runs from Autumn 2026 to July 2028.

This is expected to cover the full duration of the programme, from appointment through to the completion of Otley 800 activity.

Otley Town Council will seek value for money, but the appointment will not be based on price alone.

Payments will be made in arrears against agreed milestones or monthly invoices, aligned with an agreed delivery plan.

Tender Requirements

Otley Town Council invites submissions that include the following:

1. A proposed communications approach outlining how the tenderer would plan and deliver communications across the programme.
2. How they would manage multiple stakeholders and community contributors.
3. An outline of the expected time commitment.
4. A brief example, of no more than one page of A4, demonstrating how they would promote a community event as part of Otley 800.
5. Submissions should also include evidence of relevant experience, including similar projects delivered, experience working with community-led or publicly funded initiatives, and examples of written content, campaigns or media work.
6. Applicants should provide two referees.

Assessment Criteria

Submissions will be assessed based on general suitability, including relevant experience and capability, demonstration of understanding of the brief, and ability to deliver both strategically and practically.

Technical competence will be assessed based on the quality of the communication approach, and the clarity, tone and effectiveness of examples provided.

Financial suitability will consider value for money and acceptance of delivery and payment terms.

Closing date for submission of tender

Completed tenders must be received by **noon on 19th October 2026**.

Submissions received after this date and time will not be considered.

Contract award and award conditions

Tenderers will be shortlisted for an interview, which will be arranged at a convenient date, but no later than 28th October 2026.

Otley Town Council reserves the right not to award any contract from this tender process and is not bound to accept the lowest bid.

Submitting your tender

Tenders should be submitted by email to **eo@otleytowncouncil.gov.uk**

Tenderers are encouraged to contact:

Paula Shillaw, Executive Officer, Otley Town Council

eo@otleytowncouncil.gov.uk

to discuss the project outline. Please refer to the project specific website at otley800.co.uk for more information.

Confidentiality

It is expected that all information in this document together with additional information provided during the tender process shall be treated as private and confidential.