

HALF PENNY STEPS

Public Art Commission

City of Westminster

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1.0 THE OPPORTUNITY

Re-imaging the ‘blue bridge’ including repainting and temporary artworks

Westminster City Council (the Council) are looking for interested creative practitioners to re-imagine Half Penny Steps footbridge in W10, Harrow Road. We anticipate engaging a small group or individual artist with experience in co-creation processes, community engagement and track record of delivering high quality art, ideally in a public setting. This will enhance civic architecture and will help to celebrate and define the character of this place for years to come. We look forward to working with the successful practitioner(s) to develop an approach that is responsive to the site’s social, historical and cultural context.

2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

This commission is part of the Council’s commitments in North Paddington to support improved health & well-being outcomes for its residents.

The Place Shaping team launched the North Paddington Canalside programme in March 2024 as part of the Council’s wider North Paddington Programme. A multi-disciplinary design team developed proposals to concept level for five sites in the project area. Improvements to Half Penny Steps ranked as a priority and include the refurbishment of the footbridge and the uplifting of the adjacent public space.

The overall site vision has been ratified by public engagement that took place over ten weeks in summer 2024, where RIBA Stage 2+ concept designs were presented. The below illustration was part of this engagement and shows what a transformed footbridge could look like alongside improvements to the neighbouring public spaces (see page 7). There was overwhelming support for the proposals including changes to this site. More detailed feedback can be found in the North Paddington Canalside Stage 2 Engagement Report that is publicly available via the programme’s Common Place website and is appended to this brief.

3.0 SITE INFORMATION

This footbridge is located at W10 4NJ, the north ramp lands between 431 and 427-429 Harrow Road and gives onto a pocket park to the east. The south ramps lands on Wedlake Street.

The footbridge at Half Penny Steps stretches over the Grand Union Canal Paddington Arm. The bridge has medium-height railings, two sets of feature lights and two sets of ramps leading from either side. Its an important pedestrian connection for residents, businesses and visitors to get between Harrow Road and Ladbroke Grove neighbourhoods.

Westminster City Council owns and maintains H'Penny open space on north side of canal and the footbridge. The borough boundary lies in the centre of the canal, dividing Westminster City Council and Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.

The green spaces next to the bridge are being refurbished via a separate commission coming forward in 2025.

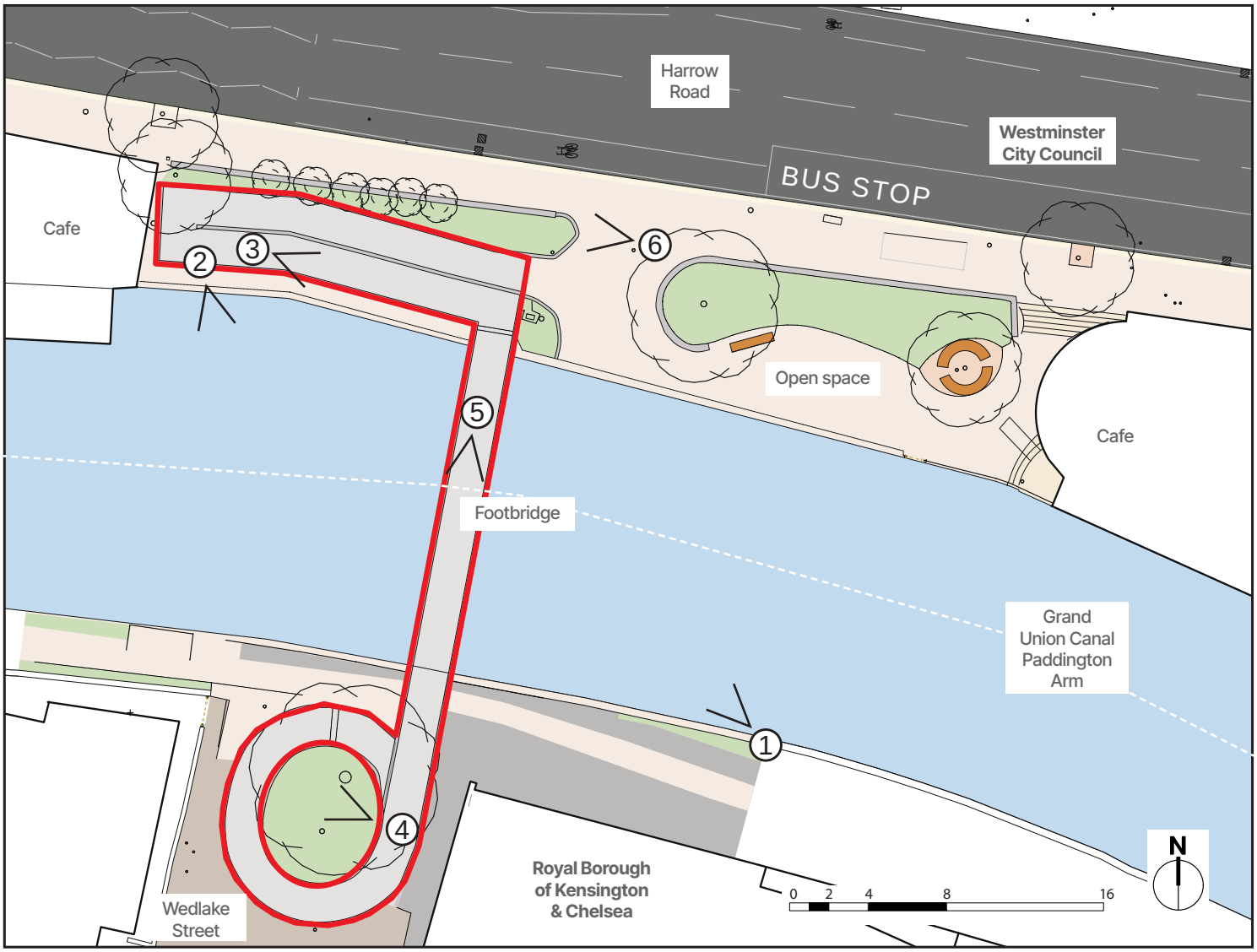


Fig. 1 Existing site plan, see site photos on opposite page.



View of footbridge from towpath (south side of Grand Union Canal) looking north west.



Circular ramp with inaccessible planting including mature cherry tree at the centre.



View of footbridge looking to circular ramp and towpath on south side of the canal



Set one of two feature lights on bridge.



View looking east from north ramp to structure that goes over the canal



Brick wall and railings where footbridge ramp meets Harrow Road on the north side of canal.

Fig. 2-7 Site photos, see further site photos in appendix

4.0 THE VISION

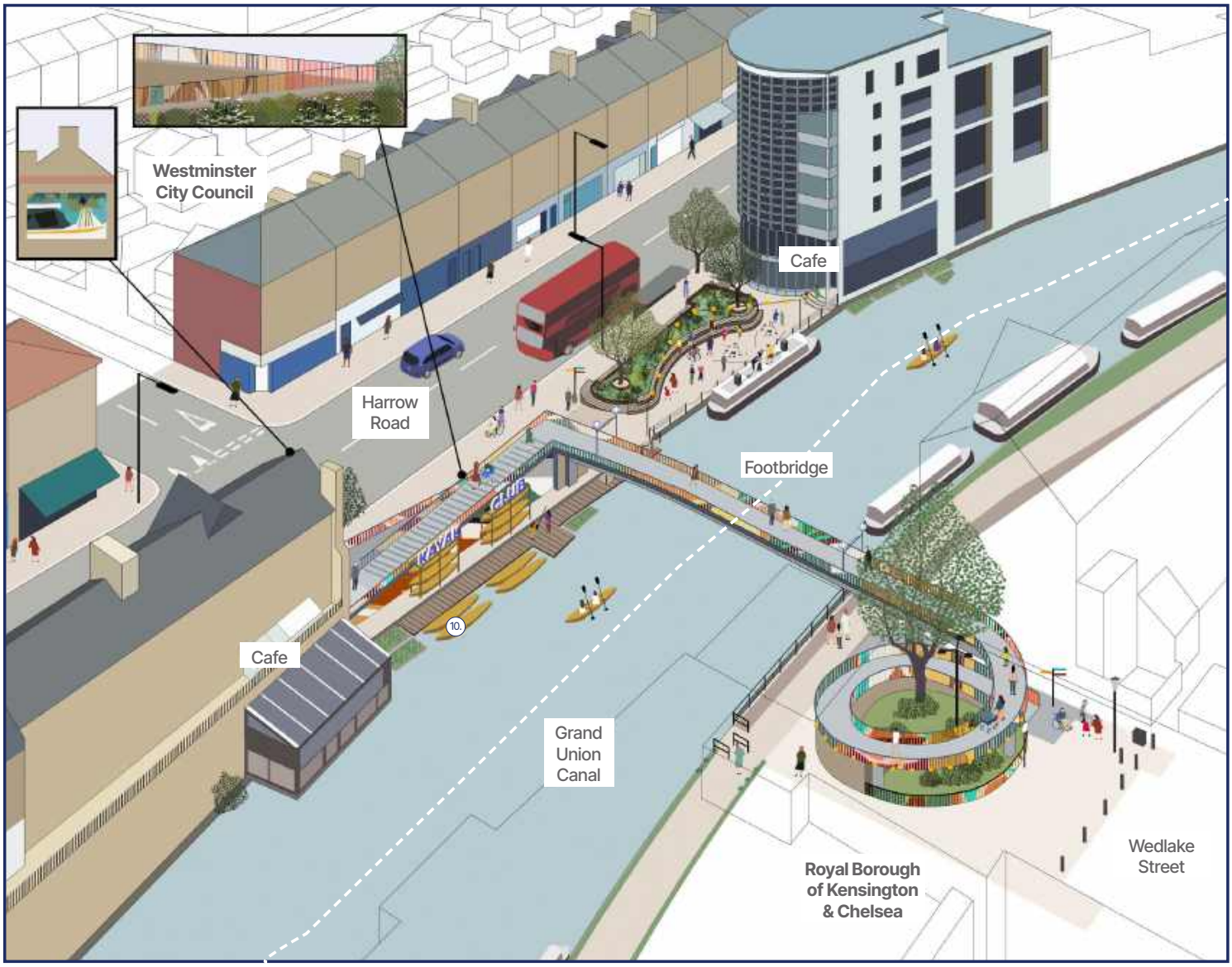
The vision for Half Penny Steps is to transform this under-utilised public open space into a vibrant and lush canalside terrace. The plan includes renewed planting, feature lighting, and amphitheatre-style seating that gives onto a proposed new community mooring point, adding life and activity to the area.

The bridge, a significant meeting point between the two boroughs, can be elevated into a piece of public art with a new feature colour and lighting scheme. Additionally, there is an ambition to convert the unused space under the bridge into a launch spot for water sports such as kayaking, pending the identification of a suitable operator. This transformation aims to create a lively and inviting space that enhances community interaction and engagement with the canal.

Further engagement with CRT is needed to ascertain if it will be possible to site a community mooring point facing Half Penny Steps public space. This new mooring point would support the programming of events and could be a stop-off point to other canalside locations as part of educational programmes for instance.



Visual developed as part of the Stage 2 Concept Designs



Visual developed as part of the Stage 2 Concept Designs

RIBA Stage 2+ concept designs have been developed and informed by public and stakeholder engagement since March 2024. The above illustration shows the opportunities of the site and should form the baseline for development of the detailed and technical design stages.

Key stakeholders include Canal & River Trust, Westminster City Council, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, residents in North Paddington and businesses on Harrow Road.

This commission is to take forward specific aspects of the entire vision that will come forward separately. The scope of this piece of work is the transformation of the footbridge only including feature colour scheme including temporary artworks. Improvements to the open and green spaces, feature lighting and the water-sport offer will be progressed separately.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

The following objectives should be achieved through this commission:

- → Create striking and inspiring artwork that is celebratory, culturally resonant and contemporary.
- → Create a lively and inviting space that enhances community cohesion, sense of pride and engagement with the canal side surroundings.
- → The artwork should transcend cultural differences and be accessible and engaging for a wide range of audiences. An adept control of colour and pattern for both painted and lit artwork is expected.
- → Celebrate the unique character specific to the place, including the high street and canal side settings, local current and historic contributions to arts & culture and the range of backgrounds of the residents and visitors to the area.
- → Support increased connections between the canal and the community, including neighbourhoods between the north and south sides of the canal.
- → Embrace participatory design methods to empower and up-skill local people and encourage a sense of ownership over the space.
- → Preserve and, if possible, enhance biodiversity including the canal's night-time bat corridor.
- → Facilitate activation and encourage increased use of public open spaces.
- → Foster an open, collaborative and transparent process throughout the design and delivery phases.
- → Ensure the refurbishment has at least a 20-year life span with a straightforward maintenance plan that has been developed with and signed off by Highways Asset Team.

6.0 SCOPE

The focus for the public art commission is to support a renewed and revitalised identity to Half Penny Steps, turning the ‘blue bridge’ into something inspiring and uplifting through imaginative re-painting and temporary artworks. The work should involve local groups in the concept and design process, supporting increased community cohesion and local pride.

Proposals must adhere to the constraints as to be set out by the bridge structures team.

The artist is expected to work to the programme as set out on page 16, and tie the key deliverables to an ambitious and effective engagement plan. A detailed methodology outlining how this commission will engage a broad audience including those heard from less often is expected. WCC officers will share comprehensive stakeholder list from the outset and lead outreach and recruitment.

We expect the artist to lead the planning and delivery of the workshops and ensure a broad range of users are catered for, where the format, content and outputs are clear, reasonable and accessible. Particular attention should be given to how the co-design process can creatively up-skill local people and build confidence. The process should create opportunities for intergenerational and inter-cultural exchange.

We expect additional temporary features to be created as an output of this commission, and involve collaborative workshops to co-create flags or bunting to be installed on a seasonal basis to celebrate local cultural events.

The footbridge has been a site of gang-related incidents. Particular attention will need to be paid to avoid any gang-related affiliations expressed in the artwork. This would include the colour red and any other colours and language that are associated with gangs that operate in the vicinity. Close working with the Council’s Integrated Gangs & Exploitation Unit (IGXU) and the Metropolitan Police’s Design Out Crime Unit (DOCU) will be required, who will be able to advise on such matters and review designs at key stages.

The Council’s Highways Asset team are responsible for this asset including ongoing management and maintenance. Sign off will be required from this team at each Key Stage Review Point, this includes early engagement with this team to ensure alignment to and adherence of requirements.

Engagement with key stakeholders Canal & River Trust and Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea will be managed by the Council.

7.0 REQUIREMENTS

Requirements of this commission are outlined below across the project life.

Requirements during the design development process must include:

→ Research and design development.
→ Place Shaping will lead on the engagement strategy including stakeholder mapping, outreach and participant recruitment to ensure broad representation and continuity of communication beyond this phase of engagement, whilst the consultant will lead on the delivery of the engagement exercises.
→ Reach a broad and diverse audience during the engagement phase. Artist involvement in outreach of participants is welcomed, such as presenting to school assembly and at community group meetings.
→ Preparation and production of publicity and workshop materials to be undertaken by the artist. On site testing and temporary artworks are encouraged to increase visibility and accessibility of the design process.
→ Delivery of a minimum of 12 hours of creative co-design workshops with local groups (identified by WCC officers and the artist) to explore both the concept and detailed design of the artwork. We see value in the co-design process to be inter-generational and appeal to a broad user group. The process should be inclusive and support the participation of those who are lesser heard.
→ Delivery of at least one set of temporary features via collaborative workshops to for instance co-create flags or bunting to be installed on a seasonal basis to celebrate local cultural events or across the month of the artwork completion.
→ Materials and labour for fabrication, production and installation of temporary interventions and testing.
→ Monitoring of engagement activities throughout the design and delivery stages to capture social impact, public reach and process of creating the conceptual and physical output. A summary document (including a short public-facing report) should be produced to capture participatory methods used, including but not limited to: photography of workshops and events, statistical analysis of participants involved and vignettes/quotes from activities.
→ All public facing material to be signed off by WCC Comms team. Documents to be under 10MB.
→ Finalising the design.
→ Preparation, submission and lead for any planning applications required including advertising consent.
→ Assisting with the identification and selection of contractor to carry out the permanent works.
→ Preparation of contractor tender information including technical drawings and specification. Creation of tender pack for pricing.
→ Coordination with contractor in relation to buildability and costs.

- → Public Liability Insurance for the duration of the design and installation period.
- → The artist will work closely with the Council to develop a scheme that is buildable and cost efficient.
- → Coordination and allocation of resource to liaise with specialists including ecologist, lighting specialists and structural engineers.
- → WCC to lead on liaising with stakeholders. Artist to prepare supporting material as requested and allow for a short meeting with key stakeholders CRT and RBKC to present the proposals.
- → The Council expects that the refurbishment has a 20-year lifespan. We would seek artists input on this based on materials and environmental conditions.
- → The Council have ultimate decision-making responsibility and the right to modify or reject final designs if they do not meet expectations.

Requirements during the tender and construction period:

- → The successful contractor will be responsible for the construction and insurance.
- → The artist is expected to act as design guardian for the construction and ensure it meets expectations and that they retain artistic control and are satisfied with the outcomes.
- → The artist is expected to follow the design development and be a part of the decision making process in the contractor tender.
- → The artist will work closely with the Council and contractor to ensure the proposal is deliverable within budget and timescales.
- → Artist to deliver short talk at a celebratory opening event to mark the public art installation and completion of the public space landscape improvements (event duration approx. 2 hours).

Design, maintenance and afterlife:

- → Maintenance Plan is required, to be developed with the Council's Highways Asset Team who manage this asset.
- → Proposal to be durable and robust, with minimal and perfunctory maintenance requirements only, to be agreed with the client in consultation with Highways Asset and Maintenance teams.
- → Budget to include an allocation for repairs and touch-ups, with site visits to be undertaken by the artist to review overall condition in years 1-5. Repairs budget to be developed by the artist and reviewed at key points with the Council.
- → The artist to provide a succinct and clear summary of the artwork's design and participation process. This information will to be uploaded onto the Council's website and may be permanently installed as informational and celebratory signage near the artwork. Content to be approved by WCC Comms team.
- → Consideration of the adaptability of the artwork such as ability to host temporary artwork to be able to celebrate annual and special events, such as the permanent artwork completion's opening month. A short and straightforward manual addressed to community groups for a 'temporary features and animation how to' strategy should be produced.

8.0 ARTIST FEE

WCC expect to receive competitive responses that are capable of delivering high quality proposals whilst demonstrating value for the local authority. We are expecting returns at a value below £25,000 for this commission.

A fee schedule will be agreed with the artist upon the award. This is expected to be drawn down at monthly intervals, triggered by the successful full or part completion of outputs that will be assessed each month.

The fee must cover all costs including:

→ Project management
→ All planning and development costs
→ All meeting attendance costs
→ All research materials
→ Engagement costs & workshop materials
→ Testing and temporary interventions
→ All meeting and interview costs
→ All action plan and report writing costs
→ Digitisation of reports and plans
→ Professional Indemnity at a minimum of £2m
→ Public Liability at a minimum of £10m
→ Employers Liability at £5m if applicable. If the consultant is self-employed or a sole trader this type of insurance is not required
→ Travel and expenses
→ Associated health and safety

If there are any additional costs associated with the commission that arise such as additional surveys or additional engagement costs (such as space hire), this should be flagged to the client at the earliest opportunity and are subject to review and approval by the client.

Alongside a fixed quote for services to cover all stages, please share day rates that can be applied for any additional work should the need present.

9.0 CONSTRUCTION ENVELOPE

We currently estimate the construction package for this piece of work will be approximately £150,000. This costing is based on the concept designs developed in 2024 for Half Penny Steps. The cost includes 30% risk and contingency allowance which we expect to reduce as detailed designs develop as part of this commission.

10.0 SUBMISSION CRITERIA

Submission requirements must include the below, or the submission will not be considered:

- → Site specific concept that addresses the brief
- → Assured designed for life of 20 years and over
- → Proposal to be durable and robust, with minimal and perfunctory maintenance requirements only, to be agreed with the client in consultation with Highways Asset and Maintenance teams
- → The artwork must not pose a safety hazard or restrict the typical usage of the site (risk assessment required)
- → Compliance with all relevant health and safety standards
- → Compliance with insurance and liability levels (see 8.0 Artist Fee)
- → Artwork must align with the Council's accessibility requirements
- → Artwork must align with the Council's environmental and sustainability policies
- → Artist must obtain all statutory consents, including Planning Permission prior to installation. That includes the creation of a Design and Access Statement and any other reports as required by the Planning Authority.
- → Artwork must not cause offence
- → Artwork must be approved by the client including the Council's Place Shaping, Integrated Gangs Unit and Highways Asset teams
- → Artwork must not be of a political nature
- → Artwork must be accessible to residents
- → Artwork should create a sense of community pride
- → Must refer to the Council's Guidance for the Erection of New Monuments Supplementary Planning Document published on the council's website)

Ownership and copyright of the submitted ideas remain with the artist. The council will own the art installation upon installation and acceptance of the work.

11.0 HOW TO APPLY

10.1 QUALIFICATION QUESTIONS

All of the following qualification questions will be required in order for your proposal to be accepted for review:

→ Confirmation that you can work to the programme.
→ Confirmation that all the above requirements will be met.
→ Confirmation that you will seek approval from the copyright holder for any copyright material that you plan to integrate into the project (if applicable).
→ Evidence of relevant public liability, employer's liability (if applicable) and professional indemnity insurances.

10.2 AWARD CRITERIA

1. Design approach, methodology and programme – 40%

A. Present your site-specific idea in outline, including a description of the artistic approach.
B. Outline the methodology
C. Present a programme, identifying key tasks and assign time allocation per key task per team member.
(max. x6 A4 pages, font size 12. Can include sketches, images and diagrams)

2. Suitability and experience – 20%

A. Please provide a brief overview of the individual/team that will be involved in the day-to-day delivery of this work. (Full CVs can be included in an appendix.) Emphasise relevant experience and skills.
B. Provide at least 3 examples of your work: demonstrating high quality and track record of producing successful art commissions to expectations, time and budget.
(max. x4 A4 pages, font size 12. Can include sketches, images and diagrams)

3. Social value & EDI – 10%

Please demonstrate your approach to participation and embedding social value in this commission. You can do this through examples of how you've achieved this in the past.
(max. x1 A4 page, font size 12)

4. Cost – 30%

Please provide:
A. A fixed fee, broken down per project stage is required.
B. Please share hourly rates that can be drawn down for any additional work should the need arise.

The quotation with the lowest total fee will automatically be awarded

30%.
Thereafter each other quotation is compared against the lowest priced quotation in accordance with the following formula:
(A÷B) x C = X
Where:
A = the lowest submitted price of all quotations
B = the total price submitted by the candidate
C = the maximum percentage score i.e. 30%
X = the score for Price
All fees to exclude VAT.

This is an open tender opportunity.

10.3 SUBMISSION
The deadline to submit your tender response is 13th March 2025.

To submit your application, if you have any questions about the public art commission, or, your application please contact npcanalside@westminster.gov.uk

Clarification questions are due on or before 24th February 2025. All questions and responses will be shared with all applicants in early March 2025.

Please submit tender returns by email titled ‘‘Half Penny Steps Footbridge Public Art Commission - ARTIST NAME’ to: npcanalside@westminster.gov.uk
Maximum file size 10MB (PDF format). Applications must be shared in one document only. Multiple documents will not be accepted.

Only applications that meet the submission criteria on page 13 and the qualification questions on page 14 of the brief document will be considered.

10.4 EVALUATION
The Harrow Road Public Art Panel and Council officers will review and evaluate the tender returns. The basis of selection will be on the submission.

Officers will advise applicants on the final decision but given the potential for a high volume of submissions, cannot provide individual feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

10.5 DATA PROTECTION
The personal information provided in your submission will only be used by council officers and the Public Art Panel for the purpose of assessing for proposal for commissioning, and to communicate with applicants regarding the submission.

The council will ask for consent to use your information for any other purpose. https://www.westminster.gov.uk/data-protection

12.0 PROGRAMME

Key project dates:

Item	Duration	From	To
Tender brief live	4 weeks	17th February 2025	17th March 2025
All clarification questions due	-	24th February 2025	
Clarification responses will be shared	-	early March 2025	
Tender responses due. No interview – written responses only will be evaluated.	-	17th March 2025	
Evaluation period	4 weeks	March 2025	April 2025
Appointment	-	April 2025	
Mobilisation period*	1-2 weeks	April 2025	April 2025
Inception Meeting	-	May 2025	
Design development and testing	3 months	May 2025	July 2025
Contractor tender§	6 months	August 2025	October 2025
Construction§	3-4 months	November 2025	February 2026
Launch event§	2 hours	March 2026	

*We expect the mobilisation period upon appointment to be a maximum of 2 weeks. If this is not possible, we expect the applicant to let us know what timescales they are able to commit to.

§Contractor tender, construction programme and launch event are estimated at this stage based on current assumptions and may be subject to change. We are actively exploring alternative routes to deliver these improvements in a shorter timespan and welcome any input regarding expediting delivery.