

## Promoting Biodiversity in Green Urban Areas

LILLE, HELLEMMES & LOMME, FRANCE

### Procurement objectives

This 4-year framework contract for the maintenance of green spaces in Lille, Hellemmes and Lomme began in April 2012. It is split into 4 lots covering: grass verges, cemeteries and parks within 2 different zones. This was to enable a large number of bidders to participate and limit the risk of only one large company winning the whole contract.

In 2001 the Town of Lille introduced overall targets to reduce pesticides and other chemicals in order to reduce pollution and promote biodiversity. These targets are now reflected in all gardening tenders.

### Background

The Town of Lille adopted a plan of action for sustainable development under [Agenda 21](#) in 2001 and at the same time began to foster GPP. The Municipality's 2010 sustainable procurement strategy is based on two preceding policies on ethical consumption (2001) and sustainable timber (2002). It also involves training on SPP for procurers and involvement with related initiatives including [Procura+](#) and [Topten](#).

Principle aims within the strategy include: reducing environmental impacts, increasing social integration and access to employment and driving the market towards sustainable products.



### Criteria used

**Subject matter of the contract:** Maintenance of green spaces in Lille and adjacent communities Hellemmes & Lomme

#### Description of service provision:

- landscape characteristics should be conserved
- green waste must be composted
- the materials & tools for lawn maintenance should sustain biodiversity
- mulching has to be carried out and materials should be biodegradable and have a density of 1000g/m<sup>2</sup>
- piles of deadwood must be left to create habitats and should be surrounded or covered by debris
- wildlife corridors should be left for animals to move between habitats
- grazing and livestock: old breeds which are well-adapted to different diseases should be used, along with a variety of animal breeds to ensure biodiversity and health of the group
- a buffer zone should be left around water bodies to support biodiversity
- animal underpasses and invisible animal shelters should be created

#### Award criteria:

- additional points will be awarded for the use and up-cycling of compost and other waste
- 10 out of a total of 55 points are awarded to sustainable development aspects including green and/or socially responsible procurement of mulch, soil and other materials and equipment, along with a detailed explanation of how the bidder ensures the following:
  - \* the controlled origin of seedlings
  - \* sustainable methods of grass-cutting, including with scythes
  - \* correct handling of invasive plant species
  - \* minimised noise & air emissions from machinery
  - \* minimised fossil fuel use by machinery & fleet
  - \* public awareness-raising for biodiversity & conservation
  - \* preservation of soil quality and maintenance of soil condition
  - \* tracking of water consumption & reduction of water use

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### Results

For the first time, the tender for this service was divided into lots geographically instead of by task area, which increased the number of bids compared to previous years. Six companies presented an offer for one or more of the lots and the Municipality believe that the number was limited by human resource and technical capacity rather than green requirements. Even though the Municipality was much more demanding in terms of environmental sustainability than in previous tenders, it did not seem to be a factor which discouraged bidders. There was no negative feedback about these aspects and the companies who were awarded the lots each were able to comply with a number of sustainability aspects in the award criteria.

Lille ensured that they were not overly demanding in terms of the environmental standards that companies were asked to comply with. This would have constituted an unnecessary risk, scaring some potential bidders away. The aim was to encourage enough bidders for successful competition and for selected organisations to improve their practices during the lifetime of the contract.

### Environmental impacts

A number of potentially harmful environmental impacts associated with maintaining green areas have been mitigated in this contract including pollution of soil and water caused by pesticides. Other negative impacts discouraged by the Municipality include unnecessary water consumption, organic waste generation, and noise and atmospheric pollution from gardening machinery and transport.

The tender has contributed towards Lille's goal of phasing out the use of pesticides in public green areas. They are on track to achieve this objective for the whole town by 2014. The strong focus on sustaining biodiversity has helped Lille to become the French Biodiversity capital for 2012.

### Lessons learned

The main factor contributing to the successful award of this contract was knowledge of the local market, which helped to divide it into lots in an appropriate way. Lille also feels that it is important to lead by setting a good example, so the same expectations exist for services conducted internally, as for those provided by external organisations.