



FUNDRAISING BRIEF

Chamberlain Highbury Trust is seeking an expert fundraiser on a contract basis to help us raise the sums needed to support the Management and Maintenance of Highbury Gardens in South Birmingham – Grade 2 listed historic gardens which are currently being restored with support of a National Lottery Heritage Fund (Heritage Fund) grant.

Budget £20,000 incl VAT

Deadline for Tenders: 24th March 2026

Tendering details below

ABOUT THE CHAMBERLAIN HIGHBURY TRUST

The Chamberlain Highbury Trust (CHT) was established as an independent charitable trust in 2016 to preserve and restore the house and grounds known as Highbury Hall and Park – currently owned in trust by Birmingham City Council – and to give them a sustainable future.

Our Vision

Inspired and informed by the story of the Chamberlain Family and the history and heritage of the house and grounds, the restored Highbury estate will be a vibrant, well used place. Young people will come to develop leadership and governance skills, local people will be able to participate in an inclusive and diverse programme of activities, and visitors to the city of Birmingham will be welcome to enjoy a unique heritage attraction. Its green space will be open year-round, will be free to visit and will provide a relaxed learning space with nature and conservation at its heart. Highbury will contribute to the economic vitality of the local area by providing space and facilities for local people to build businesses and nurture community organisations.

Achievements so far

CHT has:

- achieved substantial increases in the public accessing the House and Grounds
- succeeded in arguing for vital repairs to the house to arrest the ingress of water causing decay and damage to the basic structure of Highbury Hall

- improved the gardens by raising funds and managing a project in 2020 introducing accessible paths and removing overgrown areas
- engaged diverse volunteers and young people from all backgrounds and provided opportunities for wide participation in influencing the future of this space and in civic engagement.
- provided activities and educational events and hosted community celebrations for people of all ages
- submitted in 2023 in partnership with BCC a successful bid to funders including the City and Heritage Fund, for £12.5 million to restore both house and gardens but which has not been able to proceed due to the City being under a Section 114 notice of effective bankruptcy and unable to honour its Cabinet decision to provide partnership funding and fundraising underwriting
- submitted in 2024 a successful bid for £2.3 million to Heritage Fund to proceed with the garden's element of the restoration plan

ABOUT Highbury Hall and Park

Highbury is situated in the Moseley and Kings Heath Ward of Birmingham, and borders Sparkbrook, one of the most deprived wards in a city with high levels of deprivation.

The estate comprises an exceptional example of a mansion house and grounds created in 1879 by a wealthy industrialist in this suburban location. It is remarkable for its Venetian Gothic architecture and its wealth of craftsmanship and decoration (Grade 2 * listed). Whilst its architecture and landscape are of high quality, it is the site's close association with Joseph Chamberlain and his family that ensures its national importance. This was the site for many local and national social and political campaigns and causes it to have been described by Winston Churchill as "the place that made the weather."

Following the death of Joseph in 1914, the house was used for convalescing soldiers of the First World War. His eldest son, Austen Chamberlain, established the Highbury Trust in 1919 to manage the estate, and in 1932 the Trust was passed to the City Council 'for the general benefit of the citizens of Birmingham'.

Although parts of the house continue to be used for private functions, the charitable purposes of the site have become obscured and there is generally no public access to the house and its unique heritage.

Following extensive public consultation there was the recognition that new governance and a new operating model were needed to restore the property and to take full advantage of the range of educational and social opportunities that this unique site offers Birmingham, the UK and the world.

For more information on The Chamberlain Highbury Trust and the history of Highbury Hall and Park, click [here](#).

PROGRESS SO FAR

The Gardens

For the last six years, CHT has worked hard, and while currently unable to embark on the restoration of the mansion, has been fortunate to receive funding from the Heritage Fund to start work on the grounds, which have Grade 2 listed status (representing national importance). Plans have been agreed and granted planning permission, balancing the needs to restore some of the distinctive historic elements whilst maintaining the nature value of the grounds as part of the wider Highbury Park.

The total cost of the Gardens restoration project is £3million. The fund-raising campaign is well underway, with CHT having secured £2.3 million, from the Heritage Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation and Historic England towards:

- unifying path network
- reinstating the Italian Garden
- restoring pond edging and planning
- creating clear views and improved sight lines
- managing drainage and water bodies
- recreating historic planting
- wide-ranging activities including supported volunteering opportunities, youth leadership programme and site wide events

THE FUNDRAISING BRIEF

We need to raise the final £600k by the end of 2027 specifically for the Management and Maintenance of the Gardens once completed. To achieve that, we are seeking a fundraiser to join our team on a contract basis.

Reaching this target will ensure that the campaign is completed in full, including securing the management and maintenance of the gardens for at least 10 years, including contracted Head Gardener, volunteer management, equipment, and suitable planting. This will safeguard the sustainability and conservation of the grounds while we embark on part two of our plans: to restore the Hall, and make it available to the people of Birmingham, and beyond.

We envisage a 3-way programme of fund-raising to achieve the £600k target in two phases:

2026-2027: Private and public sector phase, targeting high net worth individuals and local & national trusts and foundations (these could be multi-year pledges, rather than funds received, but need to be secured and 'contracted')

2027: Public campaign, ideally for the final c.£50k to culminate around the official reopening (likely September)

The Chair, David Kidney, and the Vice Chair, Kate Organ will be personally involved in your work, and Kate will be your key contact for the Trust Board. There is a sub-group of Trustees with skills and networks in comms and fundraising and our Patrons¹ are also available to support the campaign. Other professionals working on a freelance basis include: a Trust Co-ordinator, a Head Gardener, and an Activities Co-ordinator, (3 days a week resp.) to support the fundraiser with site visits, cultivation events and similar, and additional administrative support once the public campaign begins.

There is no specialist fundraising software available, and the expectation is that the fundraiser will work on a shared drive (e.g. Microsoft Sharepoint or Google Drive). The appointee would be required to show adherence to GDPR regulations and work in line with the Charity Commission's CC20 guidelines.

The specific requirements of this role include:

- Reviewing existing fundraising strategy and progress and produce a detailed fundraising schedule (in priority order) with a target of raising c. £0.6m
- Advising, mentoring and where applicable, training the Trustees in cultivating HNWI/corporate relationships
- Developing applications for support and review the core 'case for support'
- Securing trust & foundation funding from previous, current and potential donors in the private campaign phase
- Running the final public campaign in final 6-9 months prior to the completion of the garden's restoration project
- Implementing an extant plan to secure legacy and 'in memoriam' gifts, with naming opportunities available in the grounds (e.g. benches, trees, areas)
- Announcing that the campaign target has been achieved on or shortly after the public reopening date.
- Attend meetings with the Board of Trustees at the direction of the Chair to discuss plans, review progress and formally report and seek decisions. (Frequency to be agreed)
- Leading on the text writing, image collation and production of any further fundraising materials to support communications.

FEE & TIMELINE

We have £20k available from our Heritage Fund eligible project costs, exclusive of VAT but inclusive of VAT if you or your company are VAT registered.

We are open to suggestions as to how your time be split, and where and when efforts should be directed to achieve the target in a timely manner.

The postholder will be accountable to the Board of Trustees.

SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

¹ [The Patrons - Welcome to Chamberlain's Highbury](#)

CHT is looking for:

Skills

- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Excellent relationship building skills and proven ability to establish constructive working relationships with colleagues, and external organisations.
- Excellent research skills in relation to trusts and foundations and HNWI and resources in the public sector
- Proven ability to write successful fundraising applications
- Proven ability to organise, prioritise and maintain workloads in the most effective way.
- Proven ability to think creatively and problem solve.

Knowledge

- Knowledge of fundraising best practice
- Knowledge of trusts and foundations and their procedures and application processes
- An understanding of data protection legislation
- Knowledge of community fundraising and techniques to be applied
- Professional standards related to Fundraising

Experience

- Experience of securing funding for Heritage Fund projects
- Experience of working with Trustees and volunteers in a fundraising capacity
- Experience of training and mentoring staff and volunteers
- Experience of working with HNWI to secure funding.

HOW TO APPLY

We are seeking applications by email by noon on 24th March 2026, to be sent to CHT's administrator Emma.CHT@outlook.com

Proposal requirement

CHT requires all those that wish to quote to submit a proposal to carry out this project that covers the following:

- approach to the project.
- a methodology that meets the brief.
- CVs of all personnel who will deliver the services.
- track record of similar projects and evidence of contacts in Birmingham and/or West Midlands area.
- two client referees
- timescale for the project.
- a fixed fee showing your daily rate, number of days spent on each task and including all fees and expenses
- details of Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

- two referees from recent projects
- the methods you use for formal and informal communication with the client.
- Fee (fixed lump sum) for this work inclusive of expenses but exclusive of VAT.

If called for interview – which will take place on in the week commencing 13th April - we will ask candidates to make a presentation on how they would achieve the required target, including a timeline for their proposed campaign.

ANY QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions prior to the application deadline, please contact us by email to Emma.CHT@outlook.com

AWARD CRITERIA

CHT does not bind itself to accept the lowest of any tender. Should the CHT wish to award a contract it will be awarded on the basis of who offered the best value taking due account of the award criteria set out in the table below. Tenders will be assessed against the following:

No.	Contract Award Criteria Question	Weighting
1	Price	30%
2	Demonstrable experience and success of other fund-raising projects	50%
3	Evidence of contacts within the Birmingham and/or West Midlands area	10%
4	Method statement for executing services	10%

ASSESSMENT

The weighted price and quality scores for each tender will be added to produce a combined weighted score. The scores for each tender will be compared to determine which tender has the highest combined weighted score. The tender with the highest combined score will be deemed as offering the most economically advantageous tender and recommended for acceptance.

COMPLIANT TENDERS

CHT requires all tenderers to submit a compliant tender that must satisfy all requirements of this Invitation to Tender.

VALIDITY

All tenders shall constitute offers and shall remain valid for a period of 2 months

from their submission date. Submission of a tender assumes acceptance of this requirement.

COSTS

Tenderers will be responsible for all of their own costs in relation to negotiating and submitting a tender.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This Invitation to Tender and associated information made available by the CHT is done so on condition it is treated as confidential by the tenderer and its advisors, ensuring it is not copied, reproduced, or used other than as envisaged to permit a tender to be formulated. The information that the tenderer considers as confidential information should be clearly marked as such in the tender or where it is provided in advance of the tender at the time of provision.

CHT
January 2026