

Tender for licensed operation

**The Manor House
Rathlin Island**

**Rathlin Development and
Community Association (RDCA) /
Rathlin Community Interest
Company (CIC)**

Application for inclusion on tender shortlist

15th December 2023

Introduction

Rathlin Development and Community Association, through its trading arm the Rathlin Community Interest Company, is seeking to appoint a single professional operator who will work with the CIC to operate the Manor House.

The purpose of this tender process is to allow the RDCA / CIC to select the “best fit” partner from a shortlist of suitably qualified and experienced businesses who can deliver and develop an excellent service. The proposal document is designed to ensure that all parties submitting proposals gain a clear understanding of the service required. Our intention is to provide enough information to enable realistic and achievable proposals, and to ensure that all parties are given fair and equal consideration.

Background

Rathlin Island is six miles off the North Coast of County Antrim and some fifteen miles from Scotland’s Mull of Kintyre. There is a resident population of around 160 people on the Island, but the population increases to in excess of 350 visitors per day in the summer.

The Manor House is one of the oldest buildings on Rathlin Island. It is a Grade B+ listed building owned by the National Trust. It has been used as a Bed & Breakfast for over thirty years on a lease basis. The National Trust has transferred the building to community usage to the Rathlin Development and Community Association. The development provides high quality accommodation and dining facilities. It houses 12 bedrooms with a lounge, dining and bar area. It sits on the edge of the harbour providing spectacular sea views from the majority of rooms.

A number of the local residents have developed businesses which promote the best in local produce including seafood, kelp and natural bath and beauty products.

Recent History

In early 2023, the then Operator of the Manor House chose to terminate the contract with the CIC early, and at short notice. In order to ensure continuity of operation in 2023, and with the agreement of the National Trust, the CIC ascertained potential interest in taking over the remaining year of the contract, and awarded a one year contract to the current Operator without a full tender process.

At the time, the CIC stated that there would be a full tender process for a contract commencing in the Spring of 2024, and this opportunity to apply for inclusion on the shortlist fulfils that undertaking. The current Operator is entitled to apply for the new contract on the same basis as other businesses.

Process Details

In the first stage, the CIC will draw up a shortlist of potential Operators, based on the criteria detailed in this section. On the basis of written responses and, if deemed appropriate, interviews, the CIC will invite shortlisted applicants to submit full tenders.

Applications to be included on the shortlist should be sent by email to manorhousecic@gmail.com, marked 'for the attention of the CIC', by **29 December 2023**. They should include a statement of a maximum 1,000 words in total explaining how they will be able to meet the following criteria, whether by training, experience or otherwise:

- Full control and accountability of a similar business, including people management, and managing income and expenditure.
- Creating a high level of customer service and satisfaction.
- Creating, preparing and cooking an imaginative and high quality food and beverage offer.
- Building close links and relationships with the local community and becoming part of the life on Rathlin.
- Driving marketing and revenue generation activities, both day to day and with special events and functions, throughout the year.
- Championing local provenance and sustainability, and most importantly what the community of Rathlin has to offer.

The application should make clear the name of the business and its legal status, including details of the directors in the case of a limited company.

It is anticipated that shortlisted applicants will be notified by **10 January 2024** and invited to submit full tenders by **5 February 2024**.