

## Choosing an Ecologist

This advice is taken from 'Choosing an Ecological Consultant' by the Norfolk County Council

### The Choice of an Ecological Consultant

The choice of ecological consultants able to undertake work in relation to planning applications or similar schemes can be guided by the following principles:

#### 1. Membership of an appropriate Institute:

Individuals employed by any consultancy should be eligible for membership of the appropriate professional body, in this instance the **Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management [IEEM]**. A list of members may be obtained by contacting IEEM at 45 Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire. SO23 9EH Tel: 01962 868626

[www.ieem.net](http://www.ieem.net)

**The use of IEEM members is strongly advised.**

Where a formal Environmental Impact Assessment is required, membership by a consultancy of the **Institute of Environmental Assessment [IEA]** is a useful indication of competence. A list of members may be obtained from IEA. The Old School, Fen Road, Kirkby, Lincolnshire PE23 4DB

[www.iema.net](http://www.iema.net)

#### 2. Knowledge of the Local Area

Ecologists who have knowledge of the local area may be able to make contact with the local relevant organisations more efficiently, undertake survey work more rapidly, and assess the implications of a scheme in relation to the local context more realistically than consultants who do not have knowledge of the local ecology. For these reasons local knowledge may be seen as advantageous.

#### 3. Located reasonably locally

Since ecological survey work sometimes requires repeat visits, visits in the early hours of the morning (e.g. for bird surveys), or at night (e.g. for bat or badger surveys) ecologists who are located reasonably locally may be advantageous. IEEM can advise on ecologists who are locally based. Alternatively the consultancy can sub-contract certain elements of work to locally based ornithologists or similar, but they should demonstrate that such sub-contractors have appropriate expertise.

Natural England may also be able to provide contacts for ecologists in the area, Natural England, Dragonfly House, 2 Gilders Way, Norwich, Norfolk, NR3 1UB Tel: 01603 674920

[enquiries.east@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries.east@naturalengland.org.uk)

Or simply input 'ecologists in Norfolk' into an internet search for lists of local ecologists.

#### **4. "In house" Ecologists**

Not all environmental consultants will have their own in-house ecological specialists and contract ecologist may be used. In such a case it is advisable to ascertain who this will be, and what professional qualifications or relevant expertise they possess.

#### **5. Tenders and detailed written proposals**

It is always advisable to seek, for comparative purposes, several written tenders which include details of the work which the ecological consultants would undertake.

A reference list of consultants can be found weekly in "Planning - for the Natural and Built Environment" published by Planning Publications, 174 Hammersmith Road, London W6 7JP [www.planning.haynet.com](http://www.planning.haynet.com)