

# First tender set to test market for biodiversity units

Suzie Horne 01 February 2024



© philipbird123/Adobe Stock

A tender for 74 lots of biodiversity units closes tomorrow (2 February) in the first sale of its kind.

These are on land stretching from Northumberland to Cornwall and include sites in Kent, Cheshire and Suffolk.

The units are being offered by landowners to help developers meet biodiversity net gain (BNG) obligations, which come into effect across England just 10 days later on 12 February.

From that date, developers will be under an obligation to improve the biodiversity associated with their sites by at least 10%, either on- or off-site.

See also: [Biodiversity net gain – legal issues for farmers](#)

As it will be more difficult to meet this on-site, good demand is expected for the units offered by other landowners.

It will be a condition of developers' planning approval that they meet the BNG obligation.

The tender is being run by Townsend Chartered Surveyors and includes lot sizes ranging from 0.16 units to 197.97 units across a wide range of habitat types.

## Explore more / Know How

Visit our [Know How](#) centre for practical farming advice

"Some of these are quite rare habitat types, for example, reed beds, wet woodland, coastal floodplain grazing marsh and floodplain wetland mosaic," said broker Hugh Townsend.

Other habitat types in the sale include wet and dry upland heathland, acid grassland, lowland meadow, mixed native scrub, ponds, hedgerows, broadleaved woodland, lowland heath, traditional orchards and gorse scrub.

"The lots on offer cover a quarter of all local planning authorities in England and their adjoining authorities," said Mr Townsend.

"The idea of a tender has caught the imagination – it's ideal for vendors because it will force purchasers to show their hand."

Mr Townsend estimates that, after the 3% commission charge to sellers by his firm, and allowing for conveyancing and other costs, sellers will be left with 90% of their unit sale proceeds.

The firm has had almost 100 requests for tender packs. Bids must be in by 1pm on Friday (2 February), and vendors must accept or reject the offers by 28 February.