

North Downham Training Project Environmental Statement

The North Downham Training Project (NDTP) was established in 1987 as an initiative of the North Downham Tenants and Residents Association, assisted by the economic development team of Lewisham Council. It was set up as a response to the lack of community facilities, advice and transport in the area. The project's aim was to provide training and prepare local residents for employment opportunities. The main training programme remains key to NDTP's identity but it may be more appropriately perceived as a community organisation responding to local needs.

NDTP's current Fast Track to Work programme includes: Information Technology, Basic Skills Literacy and Numeracy, Interpersonal Skills, Health and Safety in the workplace, Job search and work placements. The project's community portfolio includes: short courses, an After Schools Club, health-related projects, on-site counselling and a crèche. These activities have been successfully funded from a number of sources including the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, London Development Agency, Big Lottery, trusts and the London Borough of Lewisham. For many clients, especially women returning to the labour market and people with "bad memories" of school, NDTP provides a first step back into education and employment. By providing these services to Downham residents we hope to boost the local economy and assist people to obtain a range of choices and better opportunities in life.

NDTP therefore offers a holistic package of support to its clients and subscribes to the principles and ethos of sustainable development. This may be described as an integrated approach to economic development, environmental issues and social justice, thus enabling individuals to realise their potential and improve their quality of life in ways compatible with the Earth's life support systems. NDTP endorses the aims of the Sustainable Development Framework for London produced by the Mayor's Commission advising on sustainability issues. Our project shares the Framework's values including: the sense of ownership and civic responsibility for our actions affecting the environment; efficient management of our material and energy resources; respect for other citizens; and striving for the economic progress of our community. These goals are to be pursued simultaneously and not to the detriment of each other. Hence NDTP's Environmental Policy is related to other of the

Project's policies, such as that on Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities.

The Project is committed to compliance with environmental legislation, such as: the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991; the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive; and the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2003.

We recognise the impact of our activities on the environment. The physical aspects of our carbon footprint include: paper and packaging; energy (heat, light, power and water); building materials; biodegradables, electrical equipment and IT. There has also been a limited awareness of ecological matters. NDTP acknowledges that over-consumption of natural resources leads to: excessive carbon emissions; pollution and disposal issues; environmental and financial costs; and health and safety implications. There are therefore considerable opportunities for greater energy efficiency and waste minimisation within the project. The Project also accepts the business case for an Environmental Policy and drive towards sustainability, not only in terms of lower costs but also of improved competitiveness and an eco-sensitive image. In addition, an active Environmental Policy is essential to the winning of tenders and provides a model for good management practice within the organisation.

NDTP's Environmental Policy objectives have been shaped through the carrying out of waste and energy audits and the producing of baseline data. The main objectives are given below: -

- To establish an environmental management system for NDTP, in line with current legislation, by means of waste reduction, reuse of materials, recycling, disposal and "green " purchasing
- To champion the environment by raising awareness via staff, students and partners

NDTP acts as a community hub and is co-located with the GP's surgery and Goldsmiths Community Centre. We intend to use our long-standing local presence to promote the message of sustainable development and environmental issues amongst our staff and students and to influence Downham residents at large. We will communicate the Environmental Policy and its underlying values through induction sessions, e-mail, our web-site and publicity material. Our crèche and After School Club will be involved in awareness-raising activities (such as gardening and workshops). Everyone will be asked to abide by the Green Code in the IT suites, offices and project facilities.

NDTP's accommodation and adjoining green spaces (the Bubble Garden and the Peace Garden) are vital local assets and their management in an environmentally sensitive manner demonstrates sustainability in action. Green issues are also being integrated into the curriculum, for example through sessions and projects run in collaboration with the London Borough of Lewisham and Groundwork. The family-friendly approach nurtured by NDTP will ensure that the Environmental Policy's message extends to "greening" public amenities and the home. The Project will also encourage sustainable modes of transport, such as cycling.

The major targets of NDTP's Environmental Policy, for up to 3 years, are as follows: -

- 30% reduction in materials wastage over the given period eg paper and packaging
- 10% reduction in energy consumption eg heat, light, power and water
- 40% increase in the recycling of biodegradables and other materials
- 80% increase in the disposal of IT and electrical equipment
- 4 awareness raising initiatives eg workshops and projects
- 6 training sessions for staff, students and the community
- 2 joint projects with partners and on other NDTP sites eg Goldsmiths Community Centre and Middle Park Eltham.
- Achievement of Lewisham BEE (Business Environmental Excellence) Award at Gold Plus level by February 2009.

NDTP's Management Committee is fully committed to the Environmental Policy and recognises that all staff, students and partners have an important part to play in its successful implementation. Networking with like-minded organisations and environmental management advisors is also essential.

An Environmental Policy sub-group is being set up to oversee the roll-out of the Policy. NDTP prides itself on its high professional standards and continually strives for improvement in its performance. Regular progress reports, monitored against the itemised targets in the Environmental Policy Action Plan, will be given to the main Management Committee. Appropriate documentation will be acquired and/or produced. Environmental management systems and the Green Code and procurement procedures will be checked to ensure compliance with the Environmental Policy. The Policy will be reviewed annually and, if appropriate, new targets will be set in light of the evaluation.

Chair of the Management Committee,
North Downham Training Project