



DTA Ecology

*...continuing the work of
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ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

As a responsible environmental consultancy with a reputation for integrity and innovation, DTA Ecology has a duty to, and is committed to, setting high environmental standards in all areas of its work. The Practice's voluntary Code of Professional Ethics and our ongoing compliance with the Code of Professional Conduct of professional Institutes such as the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management set standards in the acceptance of professional work which is undertaken and reduce the prospect of the results of that work causing serious environmental harm.

This Environmental Policy Statement is concerned with the day to day running of the Practice, as a business. It reviews all aspects of the running of the business which may affect the environment and identifies ways to improve the Practice's environmental performance in these areas.

The statement identifies six topics relating to the Practice and the environment. The topics are Energy, Purchasing, Recycling, Travelling, Building and Grounds Maintenance and Working Practices. For each topic the aims of the policy are described. An explanation of each topic is then given and a series of policies and actions to achieve these aims are described. The policies and actions described are aimed at both the Practice as a business and at the practice personnel as individuals contributing to that business.

The practice is committed to maintaining and improving its environmental policies. The Office Manager regularly monitors operations to ensure compliance with environmental policies and the effective delivery of its objectives. The policy is regularly reviewed to identify areas where improvements can be made or new measures introduced. The latest date any amendment was made is indicated on the front cover.

1. ENERGY

Aim

To promote efficient use of energy throughout the Practice.

Explanation

The use of energy derived from non-renewable sources contributes to resource depletion, acid rain and global warming. Energy efficiency is critical to reducing the effects of climate change and unsustainable energy consumption. Our objective, therefore, is to make energy efficient improvements to minimise our demands for energy.

Policies and Actions

- Subject only to maintaining the architectural and historic character of buildings and the character of external spaces, and meeting the requirements of health and safety policies and planning and other regulatory controls, the Practice will take all reasonable measures to:
 - fully insulate and draught proof its properties e.g. use of loft insulation, double glazing, lined curtains, draft excluders.
 - provide and maintain an energy efficient heating system.
 - provide and maintain an energy efficient lighting system e.g. halogen bulbs and fluorescent strip lights where suitable.
 - purchase energy efficient electrical appliances when necessary.
 - store archived material in an energy-efficient way by controlling temperature and humidity.
- Practice personnel should:
 - ensure that heaters and lights are switched off when not required (note that fluorescent lights should not be switched on and off repeatedly, as most energy is used in starting up).
 - ensure that doors and windows are shut when the heating system is in use.
 - ensure that temperature controls on heating appliances are set at reasonable temperatures.
 - ensure that electrical appliances are used efficiently e.g. only boil as much water in the kettle as is needed.
- The practice will continue to review its properties and equipment to identify opportunities for further energy conservation.

2. PURCHASING

Aim

To purchase and promote the use, within the practice, of environmentally sound products wherever available and where costs are not prohibitive. By environmentally sound, we mean that:

- the products do not contain materials which are potentially hazardous or polluting to the environment, which do not require excessive use of energy or dangerous or polluting or wasteful materials in their production, or which will not lead to risks of hazardous or polluting materials being created or increased during waste disposal; and
- where the products include non-renewable materials they are used to a minimum extent and there is no alternative and reasonably available product with significantly lower use of the material; and
- where a product includes renewable materials the materials are used within the limits of their replenishment (e.g. paper from forests that are managed to replenish the timber supply).
- in all cases, products which minimise waste in their production, packaging, use and disposal and maximise the opportunities for waste minimisation, reuse and recycling.

Explanation

The use of environmentally sound materials and products contributes to the minimisation of environmental hazards and pollution and to the wise use of non-renewable and the efficient and sustainable use of renewable natural resources. Our objective is to maximise our use of environmentally sound materials and products, as defined above, wherever they are an available, feasible and affordable option.

Policies and Actions

- The Practice will continue to take all reasonable steps to purchase environmentally sound materials and products, in particular:
 - paper which is either recycled or produced from a sustainable resource and, where possible, has not been treated with harmful bleaching agents.
 - other products, including cleaning agents, which have been developed to minimise hazards and pollution of the environment and carry a label which indicates this eg CFC free aerosols, biodegradable detergents.
 - products which are not over packaged, or products in packaging that is recyclable e.g. returnable glass bottles.
 - products which are not made from scarce materials.
- Practice personnel should continue to use consumable products wisely and carefully to maximise their life and to minimise the use of paper (e.g. use the “duplex”, or “two pages to a side” printing options for larger documents where possible).
- The practice will continue to review the materials and methods used at its properties to identify further opportunities to introduce environmentally sound alternatives.

3. RECYCLING

Aim

To maximise the recycling of material wherever possible.

Explanation

Much of the waste which goes to landfill waste disposal sites contains potentially valuable materials such as paper and board, glass, metals and plastics, all of which are readily recyclable.

Recycling conserves natural resources, saves energy in production and transport, reduces the risk of pollution as well as saving costs in pollution control, and reduces the demand for landfill space. Our objective is to recycle and compost, where possible, materials which are used regularly by the practice.

Policies and Actions

- The Practice will:
 - provide a compost facility in the grounds for domestic and garden waste.
 - provide collection bins for paper, glass, plastics and aluminium cans.
 - provide facilities which are non-wasteful e.g. non-disposable tea/coffee making facilities.
- Practice personnel should:
 - ensure that all paper, glass, plastic and aluminium products are disposed of correctly.
 - make efficient use of all materials e.g. use scrap paper (i.e. from the photocopier) as note paper.
 - continue to collect stamps, aluminium foil and newspapers for charities.
 - use non-disposable/recyclable alternatives where possible.
 - use the email as first priority, the fax machine as second priority and the postal service only where necessary to meet other business objectives to help reduce the use of paper and save energy.
 - think before printing emails and attachments, as to whether it is necessary to print a hard copy.
- The practice will continue to review the materials and methods used at its properties to identify further opportunities for waste recycling.

4. TRAVELLING

Aim

To promote measures designed to reduce travelling and its environmental impacts and to encourage the use of public transport by Practice personnel wherever possible.

Explanation

Road transport is responsible for a wide range of environmental problems including atmospheric pollution, degeneration and loss of habitats and the deterioration of human health. Vehicular emissions contribute a significant proportion of the gases which are responsible for the green house effect including carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen and hydrocarbons, which also form ground level ozone. Petrol and especially diesel contains pollutants which can directly affect human health as well as contributing to atmospheric and water pollution. The increasing amount of traffic on our roads has initiated road building schemes many of which result in the loss and fragmentation of habitats. The acquisition and exploitation of the non-renewable fuel source to supply the increasing numbers of cars also causes environmental problems. Our objective, therefore, is to minimise car and air travel, take measures to reduce the environmental effects of necessary car travel, associated with the Practice, and to encourage the use of less environmentally damaging public transport where possible.

Policies and Actions

- Subject to the requirements of the Health and Safety Policy Statement, which shall prevail, the Practice will continue to:
 - try to minimise the amount of business travel.
 - purchase or lease cars which are zero emission.
 - encourage the use of public transport, especially by rail or tram, to meetings / site visits.
 - encourage car sharing where practical.
- Practice personnel should continue to:
 - use unleaded petrol.
 - limit speeds and drive in a way that reduces fuel consumption.
 - keep tyres properly inflated, cars well maintained and engines properly tuned for efficiency.
 - use the train, tram or buses where possible.
 - share car journeys to meetings where possible.
- The practice will continue to adopt measures which are introduced to ameliorate the environmentally damaging effects of travelling.

5. BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Aim

To promote environmentally sound maintenance practices and to encourage wildlife.

Explanation

Many building materials which may be used in the alteration or maintenance of offices can pose serious hazards and risks of pollution to the environment and human health (e.g. asbestos and leaded paints). The use of some other building materials is unsustainable e.g. tropical hardwoods and the harvesting of some natural materials (some aggregates, some timbers and peat) is environmentally damaging. Our objective is to promote the use of environmentally sound maintenance practices for the alteration and maintenance of Sherwood House and to minimise maintenance inputs. Office grounds can be of little ecological interest, dominated by a small number of exotic plant species and with a consequently low faunal diversity. Many commonly used gardening materials and methods, such as planting using peat as compost, or weed control using chemicals, can have serious environmental effects. Our objective is to increase the amenity and wildlife potential of the grounds of Sherwood House, to promote the use of environmentally sound maintenance practices and to minimise maintenance inputs.

Policies and Actions

- The Practice has eliminated all use of tropical hardwoods and peat and removed from site all known hazardous substances including asbestos, and:
 - will use environmentally sound materials and products (see Section 1 above) in the maintenance of office and storage and other buildings in our ownership and care.
 - will avoid the use of garden chemicals unless necessary for health and safety reasons.
 - where chemicals are necessary, will use the most selective and environmentally benign options.
 - will not use tropical hardwoods, other timber the use of which is unsustainable or environmentally damaging or peat.
 - will favour the use of native species and other species of value to wildlife in any planting schemes.
 - provide structures and habitats designed to encourage wildlife e.g. bird boxes, bird feeders, ponds, trees, logs.
 - compost the maximum amount of garden waste.
 - minimise the maintenance input, especially of mowing.
 - avoid non-essential use of tap water.
- The practice will continue to review the maintenance of the building and management of the grounds of Sherwood House to identify further opportunities to introduce environmentally sound maintenance practices and to encourage wildlife.

6. WORKING PRACTICES

Aim

To ensure the use of environmentally sound practices in projects undertaken by the practice and to promote environmentally sound practice in the execution of projects by others.

Explanation

The Practice has a duty to set high environmental standards in the work which we undertake and in projects which we design or supervise. Our objective is to promote the use of environmentally sound products, materials and working practices and to identify areas where further steps to minimise environmental damage and maximise environmental gain can be achieved.

Policies and Actions

- The Practice and Practice personnel will continue to:
 - employ environmentally sound practices in all work which we undertake.
 - keep abreast of advances in research to ensure the use of the most advanced and environmentally sound methods and materials.
 - promote good environmental practice amongst clients and suppliers and look for opportunities to declare that we have and implement an Environmental Policy Statement.
 - adopt the following hierarchical approach to all projects and work which we undertake, design or supervise:
 - Firstly, to avoid environmental harm wherever possible;
 - Secondly, to minimise environmental harm wherever harm cannot be avoided (mitigation);
 - Thirdly, to seek to offset or compensate for residual environmental harm that cannot be avoided or further reduced (environmental compensatory measures);
 - Fourthly, always to seek ways of enhancing the environment (new environmental benefit).
- The practice will continue to review its working practices to identify further opportunities to adopt and promote practices which are environmentally sound.