

# **ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

## **Revised Edition**

### **March 2009**

#### **A guide for employees & suppliers**

Caretower is committed to making the Bounds Green, North London community a good place to live and work, now and in the future.

An objective within the Caretower Corporate Plan is to 'Enjoy a High Quality Environment'. A priority within this is 'To do what we can as an organisation to enhance North London's environment now and for future generations'. This includes a commitment to introduce environmentally friendly practices.

As an organisation, Caretower recognises that its decisions can have an impact on the environment and sustainable development, both locally and globally. Many of the goods and services we buy can cause damage to the environment or public health through the use of raw materials, the manufacture of goods and their distribution, use and disposal.

This booklet sets out Caretower's Environmental Policy and outlines a number of actions Caretower has undertaken or will undertake to encourage employees and suppliers to incorporate environmental issues into their practices.

The Environmental Policy is only the first step towards reducing the environmental impact of Caretower's decisions. As this booklet sets out, we will produce clear, simplified guidance and implement a training programme to enable employees and suppliers make more informed choices. The Quality Manager will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy.

#### **Statement on Recycled Paper**

All 'internal usage' paper and printed matter used should be 100% recycled paper from post consumer waste.

It is recommended that the specifiers and / or budget holder use recycled paper wherever technologically possible. In considering what is technologically possible, budget holders should primarily consider if recycled paper could be used. All public and printed documents should contain a sentence declaring the recycled content of the paper used.

#### **Reduction of non essential printed matter**

Where possible, printing and photocopying should be double sided to save paper.

#### **Achieving Environmental Sustainability**

To achieve Caretower's objectives relating to environmental sustainability, Caretower recognises that it should take a positive lead by carrying out its procurement activities in an environmentally responsible manner. Caretower management will therefore work with its employees wherever possible and practical to:

- Reduce the number of goods and services procured by cutting down on waste and repairing or reusing existing goods
- Use the least environmentally damaging goods and services and promote Fair-trade or equivalent
- Provide value for money by taking into account the whole life costs of goods and services
- Raise awareness on environmental issues relating to procurement by providing relevant information and training for specifiers and end users.

Caretower will also work with its suppliers wherever possible and practical to green the supply chain by:

- Promoting environmental awareness amongst suppliers and ensuring they are aware of the Caretower's Environmental Policy
- Encouraging suppliers to introduce more environmentally friendly processes and goods (which can be verified) at competitive prices
- Assessing the environmental credentials of major suppliers and their goods.
- Reduce the number of goods and services procured by cutting down on waste and repairing or reusing existing goods.

The best environmental option is to procure and use less. This will conserve resources; reduce pollution as well as significantly reducing the amount of waste produced.

Before buying any goods, management should consider whether consumption could be reduced by reusing or repairing existing materials and goods. Management should also investigate whether alternative procedures can be put in place, which remove the need to buy goods and services. For example, can goods be shared, borrowed or loaned rather than purchased?

Use the least environmentally damaging goods and services and promote Fair-trade. Decisions should be based on environmental criteria along with other major factors such as value for money, quality and whole life costs. Management should assess whether goods and services:

- Are durable, reusable, refillable or recyclable
- Contain reused, recycled or renewable raw materials
- Are energy and resource efficient
- Use minimum packaging and encourage waste reduction
- Are non (or minimum) polluting
- Promote Fair-trade
- Are free from ozone depleting substances, solvents, volatile organic compounds and other substances damaging to health and the environment
- Are from certified sustainable sources e.g. FSC approved
- Cause minimal damage to the environment in their production, distribution, use and disposal, and
- Are on the most competitive terms having regard to Best Value.

Provide value for money by taking into account the whole life costs of goods and services. Management should take into account all aspects of costs including running and disposal costs as well as the initial purchase price. The main elements to take into account when considering Whole Life Costs are:

- Direct running costs
- Administration costs
- Spending to save
- Recyclability
- Cost of disposal

After taking all these aspects into consideration it may prove that by investing in a more expensive product or service initially, to reduce costs in the long run, provides better value for money.

Include environmental specifications in contract documentation and ensure relevant environmental criteria are used in the award of contracts.

Environmental concerns in contract arrangements can either be addressed at the specification stage of the buying process, such as specifying the content of recycled materials or that certain substances cannot be used, or by building environmental factors into the assessment process.

It is important to build into the specifications the need for goods and services to comply with Caretower's Environmental Policy. Criteria already established under official Eco labelling schemes can be used to improve specification for products and services.

The following general statement will be included in the Standard Terms and Conditions of all new contracts: "The contractor shall use reasonable endeavours where appropriate to ensure that the Services or Product (as the case may be) are provided or supplied in accordance with Caretower's policies to promote the protection of the Environment." Copies of any relevant documents setting out Caretower's policies in this regard shall be provided to the Contractor upon request. Any other environmental requirements specific to the contract can be written into the specifications.

Caretower will establish relevant criteria by which the environmental impact can be taken into account during tender evaluation and this will be clearly identified in tender documentation. The weight given to the environmental impact of the tender will be dependent on Caretower's perception of the risk associated with that purchase.

Caretower will continually review its contract specifications and assessment to ensure they comply with environmental legislation and reflect best practice.

Raise awareness on environmental issues relating to procurement by providing relevant information and training for specifiers and end users.

Caretower will also establish and maintain detailed policies and guidance for goods and services, which have a significant environmental impact by virtue of the nature and quantity purchased.

It is Caretower's intention is to increasingly develop specifications that are environmentally friendly. These enhanced specifications should encourage manufacturers and suppliers to develop environmentally preferable goods and services, at competitive prices.

Ultimately Caretower would like its supply base to be 100% environmentally committed. Suppliers and contractors will increasingly be asked questions relating to their environmental performance. Caretower intends to compile and maintain an approved list of suppliers. This will include carrying out an assessment of suppliers to ensure they meet certain criteria. This will include assessing their commitment to environmental management along with issues such as financial stability, technical capability, compliance with legislation and equality.

### **Good Practice at Caretower**

Caretower currently uses 100% recycled paper in line with corporate guidelines for all general photocopying on white paper. Recycled is currently not bought in for tinted stock due to the poor quality and limited colours currently available from all suppliers. Wherever possible, documents are produced double sided to reduce the amount of stock used.

All letterheads and compliment slips are printed on 80gsm recycled, other printed work (e.g. brochures, booklets and leaflets etc.) lend themselves to a heavier gauge of paper due to the nature of the product and the number of colours involved. Management are in the process of obtaining recyclable alternative from suppliers to assist in their education of customers towards recycled materials. Suppliers for print finishing i.e. binders, folders, etc., are always encouraged to quote for recycled if available.

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**Signed**

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**Name**

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**Date**