

Voluntary Action Camden Ethical Environmental Policy

Introduction

VAC supports, encourages, develops and defends voluntary and community action in Camden.

This document is a statement of policy of Voluntary Action Camden. Its primary purpose is to ensure that all members of staff are aware of the organisations policy on environmental issues.

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Authorised by: Executive Committee

Review Date: 26/04/13

Principles

At VAC we recognise that all our activities have environmental impacts. Our organisation has a role to play in protecting the environment and can make a difference.

VAC trustees, staff and volunteers will consider the effects of all our activities on the national and global environment. We will develop practical initiatives to realise the policy.

Our ultimate environmental goal is to reduce CO₂ emissions by 10% by 2010 as part of the 10:10, by 10% by 2012 as our Camden Climate Change Alliance commitment, and by 80% by 2050.

Although Carbon Emissions and their impact on climate change are of paramount importance VAC recognises that we should also keep sight of social responsibility and ethical considerations within our green endeavours.

VAC will

- Comply with all relevant environmental legislation and regulations, and with other requirements and standards to which we subscribe.
 - To ensure this we will undertake a recognised green quality standard and join the Camden Climate Change Alliance
- Tackle climate change through reduced energy use
 - To ensure this is done we will set targets and monitor our activities
- Reduce waste and recycle waste as much as possible
 - To do this we will remove desk bins, encourage staff to recycle and monitor the results. We will avoid using disposable items where possible, such as cutlery and cups.
- Reduce pollution
 - We will consider the impact on the environment in all purchasing and planning decisions. We will avoid using bottled water coolers.
- Purchase Ethically
 - Where possible we will purchase Fairtrade products, recycled paper products, wood will be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified. We will work with suppliers to raise green standards.

Why will VAC do this?

Environmental Concerns fit with VAC's ethos as a values led organisation.
It will also save money – VAC operates on limited resources
We will lead our members by example

What we will do

VAC has 5 environmental priorities in the short term.

1. Reduce electricity and water use
2. Year on year reduction in VAC's carbon footprint by 5%
3. Increase the percentage of waste that is recycled
4. Reduce pollution overall
5. Give due consideration to ethical concerns when sourcing supplies and suppliers

Implementation

This policy will be implemented in the following way. The policy will be agreed by the VAC Executive Committee. The policy will be developed and overseen by the VAC Green Group. It will be implemented by the Green Group which will develop an Action Plan as part of the Carbon Audit carried out by Better Climate for Camden. The Office Manager will be part of the Green Group and the Office Manager will report on progress to the EMT and to the VAC EC. It will be communicated to staff regularly through emails and at staff meetings.

What we have done so far.

- We have removed desk bins to increase recycling
- We have extended recycling to include paper, plastic, metal, print cartridges.
- We are measuring our electricity consumption and have taken steps to educate staff, visitors and tenants to use less.
- We are founder members of the Camden Climate Change Alliance
- We have signed up to the Camden Going Green quality mark
- We have replaced disposable cups and cutlery with re-usable items
- We have removed the bottled water coolers and replaced with plumbed-in units.
- We purchase catering supplies ethically (fair trade)
- We make sure that furniture using wood is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified.