

West Green Road/Seven Sisters Development Trust

Information about the First Steps project
July 2015.

Contact n15developmenttrust@gmail.com with any questions or to express interest in any of the roles.

Facebook: n15developmenttrust

Twitter: @n15devtrust

Website: <https://n15developmenttrust.wordpress.com>

Introduction to First Steps

- For groups beginning to take up the 'community rights' agenda
 - £2,500 funding, training and support to develop a community action plan by end Feb 2016
 - Training: 2 people can attend 3 of 5 skills training courses and leadership training
 - Support: 4 days of our relationship manager's time; networking with other London First Steps groups
 - More info at <http://locality.org.uk/projects/steps/>
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Aims of the Trust's First Steps project

- To progress the four main priority work areas we have identified
- To develop a community action plan that has the support of the community and draws on the expertise we need
- To provide a common sense of purpose and focus that can guide our future work
- To build leadership, confidence, trust and skills within the community
- To establish productive ways of working that will continue after the end of the project

The Trust's First Steps project

- Our community action plan will focus on the four main priorities of the Trust:
 - 1) Business Plan and Funding
 - 2) Feasibility Studies
 - 3) Stakeholder Engagement and Communications
 - 4) Governance
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1) Business Plan and Funding

- Overview: A solid business plan will be essential for attracting finance to purchase Wards Corner. Funding is needed to support development of the Trust; feasibility studies; and initial activities
- Progress so far: business plan submitted with planning application; two funding applications submitted; £1000 funding gained from WCC collaboration with *Creative Citizens* project
- Next steps: review and develop business plan; explore funding and financing options.
- Help needed: financial and accountancy skills; fundraising experience and expertise.

2) Feasibility Studies

- Overview: More detailed feasibility studies will be needed in order to deliver the community plan, including detailed costings of restoration work and structural surveys.
- Progress so far: initial studies were submitted with the planning application; pro-bono offers of help have been collected.
- Next steps: determine what studies are needed; take up pro-bono offers of help; commission full feasibility studies.
- Help needed: skills and experience of building and construction projects; project management.

3) Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

- Overview: The Trust must build positive working relationships with local residents, businesses, traders and community groups, as well as key stakeholders. Strong branding and communications will be essential in building support.
- Progress so far: Positive initial meetings held with all groups and stakeholders.
- Next steps: develop and maintain the Trust website, Facebook and twitter accounts; build and use email lists; continue to hold regular meetings.
- Help needed: web and social media; design, branding and PR; organising meetings.

4) Governance

- In order to be democratic, representative and community and business-led, the Trust will need to put in appropriate governance arrangements.
 - Progress so far: initial meetings held with all groups and stakeholders; all Trustees committed.
 - Next steps: explore governance options; ensure a good balance between transparency, inclusivity and effectiveness.
 - Help needed: expertise and experience in development trusts; administrative support for Trust meetings.
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How will the project work?

- A steering committee will provide leadership for the project, supported by a paid worker (six days in total; write to n15developmenttrust@gmail.com by 24 July if interested in this role with CV and letter)
- Three community events will be held in at the start, middle and end of the project to gather input, discuss and agree the final action plan
- Specialist workshops will be held in between on each of the themes, bringing together community members with relevant experts

The steering group

- 6-12 people who can commit time, skills and/or experience to lead the project between now and end Feb.
 - Drawn from the Trust's beneficiary communities: market traders, local businesses, local residents and those who use the town centre.
 - Plus others who can offer relevant skills and experience and support the aims of the Trust
 - Expressions of interest to n15developmenttrust@gmail.com by 24 July explaining why you would like to join
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Leadership and skills training

- So far, we think the following courses are most relevant to the Trust:
 - ‘Telling your story’ (social media and communications)
 - ‘Working together’ (building partnerships)
 - ‘Problem solving’ (working through complex issues, functional and dysfunctional working)
 - Leadership training
- Different people will attend the training and leadership events, from steering committee and/or wider community

Next steps

- **By Friday 24 July:**
 - Express your interest in joining the First Steps steering group
 - Express your interest in the paid support worker role
- **August:** The steering group will meet and take key decisions about the project
- **September:** Community meeting to launch the First Steps project
- **Between now and the launch:** volunteer for one of the four working groups