

# Tomorrow's Planners

The way to a  
**Professional Career in Planning**

Improving black and minority ethnic representation in the profession.

Winner of the **Equality and Diversity Award** at the RTPI Planning Awards 2006

Winner at the Civil Service Equality and Diversity Awards 2006 for **Best Partnership**

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POSITIVE action TRAINING HIGHWAY





# Tomorrow's Planners

PATH National, The Planning Inspectorate and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have been working together to develop the Tomorrow's Planners initiative which aims to increase the representation of people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds in the Planning Profession over the next ten years.

The recognition of all cultures, their inclusion in the mainstream and positive management of diversity are key drivers for the UK in the new century, to ensure that our society continues to evolve for the benefit of all. The built environment is a common resource and must satisfy the needs and aspirations of society through the planning process.

Tomorrow's Planners will improve multi-cultural representation in planning through;

- The use of positive action training programmes (section 37 and 38 RRA 1976 – Amendment 2000) which provide access to opportunities for people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups in professions where they are under represented.
- Raising awareness of the planning process and the individuals can play in that process to influence the evolution of the built environment.

"Path National is in its fifth year of partnership with the Planning Inspectorate. We have worked with the DCLG and other employers to provide career opportunities in the planning profession for people from the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. Since the scheme was piloted in 2002, PATH has been successful in recruiting 81 Trainee Planners. To date, over 25% of the trainees have secured full time employment within the planning profession as a consequence of this programme. The results are pleasing, it is evident the programme will go a long way in promoting a sustainable and diverse workforce within the sector.

With over 20 years experience in skills development, mentoring and other support programmes, we are pleased to be supporting an initiative that provides quality training and employment opportunities for our clients."

**Tony Wilson**  
Project Manager  
PATH National Ltd

"We believe the Inspectorate profession should respond to and reflect the community it serves, both in the way it conducts its business and in the makeup of its staff.

That is the basis on which we embarked on the Tomorrow's Planners initiative. We started on a journey to become an organisation which encourages diversity, by setting the highest standards for ourselves and acting as an example to others.

...we were not content to rest there. As one of the leading employers of planners in the UK, the Planning Inspectorate is determined to encourage others to make the same commitment. We have formed a partnership with PATH to bring in more host organisations and to encourage candidates from minority communities to become trainee planners.

We have been delighted with the high calibre of candidates that we have been attracting since the programme's launch. The example of their skills and commitment will help to encourage others from minority communities to join the profession. We look forward with confidence, working alongside PATH, to a successful future for the initiative."

**Katrine Sporle**  
Chief Executive  
The Planning  
Inspectorate

**Chris Shepley**  
Chair of Tomorrow's  
Planners Steering  
Group

# Case Studies

“ Luton has a multi-cultural population and the BME groups are under-represented in the Planning Service.

In 2004, we recruited a PATH trainee in Planning administration and quickly realised her potential as a Planning Officer - she is now fully qualified.

The Tomorrow's Planners initiative coincided with receipt of the Planning Delivery Grant and a period of high vacancy levels; we decided to build on the earlier success by increasing the number of trainees in the Planning Service. Apart from having Trainee Planning Officers from the BME backgrounds, the fact that we had two additional Planning Officers was also a benefit.

Both have proven to be valuable assets to the team; one has now obtained their planning qualification and has successfully applied for a permanent Planning Officer post with us and the other has submitted their dissertation and is awaiting the results. This reflects how well the Tomorrow's Planners initiative works, and when resources allow we will be happy to recruit further trainees. ”

Ian Slater

Head of Planning, Environment and Regeneration  
Luton Borough Council



Abel started his traineeship with Bristol City Council in September 2003. He is now a Planning Officer with another local authority.

“ Planning has been my profession for 22 years. When I came to the UK I was eager to resume my professional career, however, after 3 years of trying to break into the field, I was unsuccessful. Fortunately, I came across PATH and have not looked back since.

Whilst on my traineeship, I never felt alone; my supervisor was genuinely interested in my progress on a day-to-day basis. I could also communicate with PATH at any time if I had problems, in addition to the regular reviews with my Personal Advisor.

The traineeship, whilst on placement, was very hands-on. The responsibilities I was given were equivalent to that of the practicing planners; the only difference, understandably, being the mentoring and monitoring I received from PATH. The level of responsibility and support made me feel both confident and valued. ”

Abel Musabayana

Tomorrow's Planners Graduate

“ There is a strong mix of Black and Ethnic Minority communities in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough, but the ethnic make-up of the Planning and Transportation Department does not reflect this diversity. We have tried a number of ways to recruit planners from BME backgrounds over the years but had not managed to raise the BME proportion in the workforce to match the rising proportion in the population we serve. The 'Tomorrow's Planners' programme coupled with funding available through the Planning Delivery Grant gave us the positive action opportunity we had been seeking.

We now have five trainees in the Department; one in Planning Policy and two each in Development Control and Planning Development. Two are now in their second year and are expected to complete their Post Graduate Course at UCE this summer. The other three have been with us since September 2005. We treat the trainees in exactly the same way as we treat the graduates we have recruited recently, who are on the same post graduate courses at UCE. Because individuals have different aspirations and competences, we have adopted a flexible approach to the training programme, allowing trainees to either stay in one team or move after one year to another team. We are encouraging the trainees to take on as much responsibility as they can cope with in their teams so that they are in the best possible position to apply for any vacancies that may arise in the department. The trainees have every opportunity to develop a strong CV as a springboard for a career in planning. ”

John Harden

Planning Development Manager  
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Pratima started her traineeship with the London Borough of Redbridge in September 2004. She has since gone on to secure full time employment as a Policy Planner with another local authority.

“ The opportunity to become a trainee planner enabled me to develop a number of professional skills, and consequently secure employment.

My confidence has grown over the past year, as I have developed through my traineeship. Working and studying simultaneously has been excellent, as I have been able to put into practice the legislation, principles and practices of Town Planning that I have been taught. The skills learnt within the workplace and university will be invaluable to me in my Planning career.

My main duties included Telecommunications plans, Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy responses to formal and informal applications, Public Consultation, Assisting with Local Development Framework, Property Searches and Joint Waste Development Documents.

I received unfaltering support from PATH; I was able to contact my Personal Advisor at any time to discuss any problems I encountered. ”

Pratima Ahuja

Tomorrow's Planners Graduate



This programme is committed to increasing the representation of black and minority ethnic groups working in the planning profession to a point where it broadly reflects the make up of the communities it is intended to serve.

This project is delivered under section 37 of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment 2000)

**For further details on being a host or a trainee please contact:**

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