



inside outlook

What makes a positive working environment for disabled people? We ask Alan Gordon, a stock keeper at Green Tracks. Alan's general duties include stock control and building bird boxes and he's currently embarking on an Excel computing training course.

What makes a good working environment?

- People being understanding and informal
- Working in a non-pressurised environment but being able to meet deadlines
- Having the support and supervision provided to build confidences
- Being given opportunities to move into mainstream employment (should you wish to)
- Flexibility built in around working hours etc.

What difference has working in a supportive environment made to you and your general well being?

Feeling much better in myself, I can see light at the end of the tunnel. On the whole it gives you a feeling that you are not the only person that is suffering. At Green Tracks knowledge and skills are shared between all members of the team and that is very much valued and appreciated. I have increased my confidence and communicate more readily and easily. In general terms it is helping my recovery process, I can now accept the more positive aspects and also accept positive criticism.

What do you most enjoy about working for Green Tracks?

I enjoy working with my hands and creating things from wood. I have been given the opportunity to learn new skills and to work with new tools that then produce new goods for sale within the business. I also enjoy the social aspect of work, for instance, the Christmas meal outing in 2005 to Callender - we had a great day out! The fact that I have good working environment and enjoy working with the team.

What is the most difficult aspect of work?

Memory and changing/converting to metric systems, although I am learning to adapt and cope with the changes.

How do you deal with this?

Through communication and working within a sheltered environment, by being confident enough to participate in outside training and in-house learning and take advantage of any opportunities available.

Is there anything that you would like to change about work?

I'd like to see more financial security, this would give Green Tracks the ability to offer more work places to more people who could benefit and create an even better environment for people. As far as the working environment at Green Tracks everything works well.

On your first day in a new job, what would make it go well?

Nothing!

What would make it go badly?

Everything!

How do you think you have changed since working for Green Tracks?

I am more cheerful and less grumpy. Much more able to handle people's reactions to mental health problems and vice versa.

What are your hopes for the future?

To continue to get better and ideally finish my working life within Green Tracks. I would like to secure mainstream employment within this business.

Green Tracks is an emerging social firm that provides an environmental services - including garden makeovers, hard landscaping, pathwork, decking and fencing, etc - for local communities within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. For more information go www.greentracks.co.uk or call 01224 212774.