BEN

Ethnic Communities and Green Spaces

Guidance for green space managers

Introduction

The role of high quality green spaces has won a significant place on the sustainable development agenda. It is now recognised that access to the use and enjoyment of green spaces, participation in its maintenance and improvement, and the creation of new spaces tailored to the needs of a range of social groups deliver a better quality of life.

With the realisation that working for sustainable development means including everyone, involving ethnic communities is one of the key challenges. There is a twin delivery of outcomes. Parallel to involving and benefiting members of any disadvantaged group comes the release of their vast missing contribution.

The 12 guidance papers, the 36 examples of good practice, and the focus group and workshop reports are the fruits of 3 years of work supported by the Special Grants Programme of the ODPM. These aim to stimulate and support green space managers to open out what green spaces have to offer to ethnic communities. Although this work focuses on ethnic communities, ethnic communities are just one of many disadvantaged or socially excluded groups. As such, many of the themes and solutions will apply to many other disadvantaged or socially excluded groups.

The 36 examples of good practice selected fall into three main categories:
A. Increasing the use of green spaces by ethnic groups.
B. Involving ethnic groups in the care and improvement of green spaces.
C. Enabling ethnic groups to participate in the creation of green spaces.

Do consider visiting the spaces. It would make the good practice come to life for you. Contact details are on the CDRom.

Focus groups were held with a range of community groups and individuals. These were run using a standard pattern for comparability, and carefully tailored in each instance to address relevant cultural and organisational factors. We felt that it was important to involve a range of members of ethnic groups that were at very different stages of development in terms of awareness and contact with green spaces. Bearing this in mind, judgement as to the quality of input is less important than insight into the context of their specific needs. Follow up actions should therefore seek to address the situation holistically. A summary of the views of a range of ethnic communities is included on the CDRom.

The guidance papers also signpost you to particular examples on the CD Rom, giving real life illustrations of the points that have been made. The papers are followed by additional useful information and suggestions for further reading. There is no intention to be comprehensive. The BEN website is an ongoing source of the latest information and resources available.

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Contents

A sense of belonging
Guidance Paper 1

"The embodiment of spiritual and social feelings, and a sense of belonging for individuals and the communities are extremely important for ethnic communities. Attention must be given to these areas"

Barnhill, Moss Side, Manchester - focus group

"I have been involved in the care, improvement and creation of green spaces. When I started, people thought I was doing it as part of community service - for doing some crime - they thought I was a criminal. But after a while when they saw me out there regularly they started to ask me what I was doing and taking an interest."

Balsall Heath Forum, Birmingham - focus group

None of us would choose to go where we are made to feel that we do not belong. A green space is not an isolated island. It is part of the public realm, where anyone can go. Developing a sense of belonging means addressing the interface, not only between ethnic communities and those responsible for the green space, but also the ambience of the space created by all those who use it.

The picture given by the participants in the BEN Green Spaces Focus Groups shows us that there are many themes to be aware of when we proceed to address the layers of experience, which promote a sense of belonging. This paper flags up some of the themes to be addressed and what we may do about them.

Themes relating to a sense of belonging

Some themes to be aware of in relation to a sense of belonging:

1. Newcomers feeling like strangers or intruders.
2. Being made unwelcome by others who use the space.
3. The lack of features that recognise cultural diversity.
4. Unfamiliar activities.

Addressing the creation of a sense of belonging for members of ethnic communities

1. Newcomers feeling like strangers or intruders

This is especially true for individuals and groups that feel vulnerable. It is awkward for anyone to be in a space, which is new to him or her. There is always a process of subtle social negotiation. This is all the more true if the green space is small, or even in a larger space if they are surrounded by others who use the space as their own and have established their use of the available areas at particular times for their activities.

Some ways forward:

• Obvious presence of park wardens.

• Park wardens who can be purposefully aware of presence of vulnerable groups and take action to welcome and reassure them about the use of the green space - introduce themselves, talk to them in a friendly way, show them around the green space,

talk about and invite them to activities they can join in with.

- Outreach to ethnic community groups inviting them to take part in activities and purposefully introducing them to people who will welcome them.
- Identifying the activities that particular ethnic groups would like to do and identifying a space and legitimised "booked" time for them.
- Run events / festivals which enable different social groups from the whole community, the main white community and ethnic communities, to participate in organising it and to mix in a fun atmosphere.

Abbeyfield Park, Sheffield - a music and cultural festival to involve all the ethnic groups in the area.

Viewfinder, Sheffield - refugees and asylum seekers on a photography course enjoy visiting cultural festivals in near by green spaces.

2. Being made unwelcome by others who use the space

Sometimes there are individuals and groups who openly demonstrate that they consider members of ethnic communities to be unwelcome. This can at best be uncomfortable and at worst threatening. Vulnerable individuals and groups may simply not come back. Stronger individuals and groups may stick it out and find out the times when such undesirable people are not there and they can come and be left in peace. Another scenario may be that angry young ethnic minority people who no longer put up with being considered "not British" may hit back with words, or more unfortunately get into fights.

Some ways forward:

- Visible presence of duty officers / wardens as reassurance, supporting people so that they do not give up and go away. When a situation involves only awkwardness, continued presence legitimised by wardens may bring acceptance.
- Wardens / duty officers who are prepared to intervene and who are trained to deal with awkward situations.
- Have a picture of the problem in relation to your neighbourhood. Talk to schools, youth clubs, and social services and see if there are aspects which each can address.

George's Park, Lozells – the story of a group of community activists organising to improve safety in their local park.

St Agnes' Park, Bristol – where the presence of a friendly park warden helps the community to feel safer.

3. The lack of features and interpretation which recognise cultural diversity

There are clearly areas where the character of specific cultures is expressed through highly visible features, and we do not give this a second thought. Chinatowns in various cities are obvious examples. Besides being places which ethnic groups frequent, they have become a focus for the general population to access culturally defined pastimes...strolling around enjoying the different ambience, eating, browsing in shops for entertainment and buying "curios". In areas where particular ethnic groups run their businesses, the shop signs in different languages, the choice of colours for shop fronts, the decorative elements - these all give flavour and character to an area. Many ethnic minority people see these areas as real Comfort Zones, enjoying places that have visible features which recognise their presence in society, and which provide cultural links to their countries of origin...a mixture of pride and nostalgia.

But, beyond these areas, there is a need for more awareness of appropriate opportunities to cultural recognition through creating new artefacts that express the recognition of cultural presence in multi-cultural Britain.

Involving ethnic groups in a range of actions around the recognition and expression of cultural identity in a green space is the most challenging areas of work in engaging with ethnic communities. Aspects of multicultural interpretation are covered in the paper "Who We Are - Interpreting Cultural Identity". Available on the BEN website

Some ways forward:

- Commissioning new artwork from a range of cultures in a green space.
- Using green space for the temporary exhibition of artwork from different cultures.
- Drawing attention to the many features taken for granted as common features of British parks, identifying them as having their origin in other cultures, and interpreting them to demonstrate the relationship of Britain to other countries, e.g. pavilions, pagodas, fountains.
- Use green space for culturally orientated activities, e.g. identifying a space for Chinese elderly to do Tai Chi early in the morning, ensuring a feeling of safety through the presence of a warden.
- Encourage groups to use your space for their own programmes of activities.
- Provide multicultural and inter-cultural activities that bring the mainstream community and ethnic groups together.

- Identify if possible areas in your green space in which you can create features that focus on cultural aspects, with links to the countries of origin of local ethnic groups and which introduce and create interest for the main white population.

- Holistic interpretation of features and history, with particular attention to educational activities.

- Plants are features too. Some ethnic groups long to see features, including plants, which have a spiritual meaning. Identify places where you may be able to develop new planting and involve them in identifying plants that have cultural or spiritual meanings. Planting these with them will support the creation of a sense of ownership and belonging.

- Ethnic groups love to be enabled to grow fresh herbs and vegetables from their country of origin. Allotments can reach out to ethnic groups to offer an opportunity and link with the many allotments that already have many different ethnic groups participating and who sometimes run a seed-sharing scheme.

- Some green spaces may be able to find a patch of ground for ethnic groups to grow herbs or vegetables from their country of origin. Some spaces have put up greenhouses to extend the range of things, which it is possible to grow.

Chumleigh Gardens, South London – multicultural gardens include planting representative of Oriental, Mediterranean, African and Caribbean, Islamic and English regions.

Clovelly Garden, Southampton – inspired by the colourful designs of sari fabric, landscapers have created a sheltered garden where elderly South Asian people can relax in same-sex surroundings.

Mughal Garden, Lister Park, Bradford – a paradise garden in the style of the Mughal Princes of India features fountains and archways signalling a sense of cultural belonging to the diverse South Asian communities bordering the park.

Cashel Forest, near Glasgow – reforesting the mountainside above Loch Lomond has profound spiritual meaning for Scotland's refugees.

For examples of food growing projects, see:

Concrete to Coriander, Small Heath, Birmingham – Bangladeshi women get active.

Ryton Organic Gardens, Coventry – offers training to disadvantaged communities under the Organic Food for All programme.

Three Sisters, Newcastle – Native American culture and seed saving methods kept alive and taught to schoolchildren.

4. Unfamiliar activities

Belonging to a place is about being there and doing things. Increase the range of activities that ethnic groups may do. Green spaces may have activities which are unfamiliar to particular ethnic groups, or which are too expensive for them to access.

Some ways forward:

- Do some outreach work to interest ethnic groups in a range of activities and fund a taster programme. Schemes such as those run by Sport England are keen to support efforts to involve newcomers in various sports.

- Once ethnic community groups are really interested, if they cannot afford to continue, the fact that need is established means they can be assisted to identify funds which will support such programmes of activities, e.g. Awards for All will give up to £5000 for activities for disadvantaged groups.

- Support ethnic community groups to gain the capacity to organise programmes of activities related to your green space and to access funding, perhaps together with you, to implement them.

- Link to other green spaces, which can share expertise and opportunities for ethnic participation.

- Enthuse them to address ethnic inclusion. Bounce off each other's efforts and expertise to involve ethnic communities with green spaces.

River Lea, Stamford Hill, East London – Jewish boys decide they want to take up rowing – but not on Saturdays! The girls enjoy riverside art activities.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

In general, monitor your progress and involve members of the ethnic communities to work with you in increasing their sense of belonging in relation to using your green space. It is an important basis for all the different levels of involvement, from use of your space to its care and improvement. Your work will contribute not only to an increasing involvement by ethnic groups with your space, but also to social cohesion. It will not only benefit the lives of ethnic groups, but also ultimately release their missing contribution.

Organisational capacity to work effectively with ethnic groups
Guidance Paper 2

Successfully engaging with local ethnic communities

Any organisation new to working with ethnic communities needs to embrace organisational culture change and address organisational capacity to work effectively with ethnic groups.

Themes around addressing organisational culture change and organisational capacity include:

1. Promoting cultural awareness across the organisation.
2. Promoting commitment to cultural equality at all levels of the organisation.
3. Identifying and putting into place the skills needed by organisational personnel.
4. Identifying and putting into place the time and resources needed to engage effectively with ethnic groups.
5. Opening up employment opportunities for ethnic groups in relation to green space.
6. Ethnic minority representation on advisory groups and other decision-making structures.

Addressing organisational culture change and organisational capacity

1. Promoting cultural awareness across the organisation

Cultural awareness lays down the essential basis for all involvement with ethnic communities. If the organisation is new to this work, expertise needs to be bought in to assist the organisation to map out its needs in relation to addressing cultural awareness and to gain the confidence to visualise and implement a programme of work that successfully engages with ethnic communities. Cultural awareness is as much about aspects of culture as about social and cultural needs that stem from the position of cultural minorities within society.

This can take various forms and proceed in different ways, including:

- Needs assessment surveys, where experts are brought in to assist personnel at different levels of the organisation to explore and identify their needs, resulting in an action plan.
- Various off the shelf forms of diversity training offered by different agencies.
- Tailored awareness training, where an initial mapping of themes of need direct the design of awareness training sessions.
- Learning at the coalface through encouraging organisational personnel to volunteer for ethnic community groups. Here the staff go without their own agenda but learn about and engage with the agenda of ethnic communities. Expert de-briefing of the experience is needed to enable staff to read and learn from their experience properly.

- Seminars/events enabling contact and dialogue, e.g. a programme which invites members of various ethnic groups to make presentations about their communities' needs and aspirations, followed by facilitated dialogue. It is good practice to develop these with ethnic groups.

St Gemma's Hospice, Leeds – was assisted by the heath authority to draw up an action plan for addressing the palliative care needs of ethnic communities, including the introduction of some interfaith elements into the design of the hospice gardens.

2. Promoting commitment to cultural equality at all levels of the organisation

Many organisations simplistically believe that commitment by staff working on the ground is enough. Commitment at all levels of the organisation is the basis for long-term success:

- Commitment at board level marks the direction of the organisation as a whole and informs the policy and strategy of the organisation.

- Commitment at senior level ensures that implementation of ethnic involvement is driven from the highest level. Their awareness and understanding of the issues allow for the appropriate human and financial resources to be released. New work with ethnic groups must be properly resourced and supported. Infrastructurally, working with ethnic groups should be written into job descriptions where appropriate, and funding for specific initiatives earmarked.

- Commitment at middle management means that ground staff will get the support needed for their work. This is particularly important in the early stages when ground staff are working for their first breakthroughs. Committed middle management will also play the role of feeding back upwards through the organisation, giving senior personnel and the board a good understanding of both successes and emerging concerns which need to be addressed.

- Commitment by staff responsible for the organisation's public image, and the delivery of information.

- The need for commitment of project staff at ground level is obvious.

TWIGS, Swindon – following a research study, which identified barriers to social inclusion in therapeutic horticulture, and as part of the Richmond Fellowship's action plan for achieving greater diversity, management have been reflecting on their practice, making changes where necessary, and operational staff have been receiving cultural awareness training from BEN.

3. Identifying and putting into place the skills needed by organisational personnel

- Properly resourced training and developmental support is vital. Everyone who has not worked with a range of ethnic groups needs to acquire skills.

- Employing someone from the local ethnic community may work to a limited extent because of the inside knowledge of a particular culture and community carried by the employee. But, persons from ethnic communities do not have an inborn skill to work with a range of different cultures any more than a person from the mainstream community. We all need to be trained and to learn the generic skills of how to assess cultural knowledge and to engage with different ethnic groups, finally winning the ultimate prize of the trust of many long neglected groups.

- For mainstream community members, training may include facilitating contact with ethnic groups and de-briefing the experience. For persons from ethnic groups, training may include addressing particular experiences of discrimination so that the necessary understanding and emotional distance from these experiences free them to work with clear objective views about issues relating to ethnicity.

- Training for skills to work in a socially and culturally aware manner is the basis for effective work.

- Developmental support is also vital. Much of the initial training, done at the level of intellectual understanding, will not fully make sense until one is in the field. Additionally initial training cannot fully address the specific focus of the work of an organisation. It is only when one is engaging with ethnic groups that further areas of training need are brought to light. Continuing developmental support for staff new to this work builds their confidence quickly and helps them to solve problems head on

with instant access to expertise and new learning. Developmental support can mean buying in a number of hours of telephone support to advise on situations arising or periodic de-briefing.

Rosehill Quarry, Swansea – BEN Development Worker worked with a trainee community development worker from the Bangladeshi community to make links between Bangladeshi women and children and a local green space project, learning from one another in the process.

4. Identifying and putting into place the time and resources needed

All new initiatives should view their first outline work programmes as an indication of possible areas of work. For any organisation new to the field of ethnic environmental participation, periodic review and evaluation of progress is needed in order to regularly re-focus the work programme to ensure its success. Are the following adequate or are more resources needed?

• management support

• personnel time

• training and developmental support (hand-holding)

• expert advice

• facilitation of contact with ethnic groups

• financing the above

If more resources are needed and can be found, the work programme may be expanded. If not, a longer time scale may be needed, perhaps with the initial objectives re-designed.

5. Opening up employment

Because of decades of neglect and rejection, many members of ethnic communities look inwards for what they would do for a living, drawing on a restricted range of jobs. Ethnic groups need to be introduced to the full range of jobs available. Young people in particular need to be able to aspire to new areas of endeavour. .

6. Representation

Unless one is very lucky (and it can happen that someone comes forward immediately from an ethnic group), representation from ethnic communities on advisory groups and communities is the ultimate expression of success in the long process of nurturing interest, winning trust and building the capacity of ethnic groups to participate fully in decision making alongside everyone else.

Consultation
Guidance Paper 3

"Many members of our communities are not aware of green spaces locally and further afield. Their use of green spaces is limited. Members of the communities are unsure of what is available in terms of activities. They are uncertain as to whether what is offered may be suited to their social and cultural needs. However given the right opportunities, ethnic communities would feel encouraged to participate."

Barnhill, Moss Side, Manchester - focus group

One of the key ways forward is consultation, with the aim of informing action for increasing involvement of ethnic communities. There are different scenarios for consultation, short term and long-term exercises that build up a dialogue with ethnic groups.

Building a relationship in the long term

Those who are locally responsible for green spaces need to:

- Put consultation on the agenda of their policies and strategies and action plans.

- Address organisational culture change as appropriate in relation to ethnic inclusion.

- Identify personnel who will have the responsibility for building a relationship with ethnic communities written into their job description.

- Train relevant personnel to acquire the awareness and skills to work effectively with ethnic groups.

- Monitor progress and review working practices.

Getting started

Those responsible for green spaces need to establish confidence within local ethnic groups in order to engage with them through a first consultation to kick off the process of involving ethnic groups in the use of green space. They need to:

- Identify key organisations that can assist and facilitate contact with ethnic groups, e.g. Black Environment Network, the local Racial Equality Council.

- Conduct meetings with the contacts identified to explain what the aim of the consultation is and how the envisaged process of engagement with ethnic groups will result in benefits to ethnic communities.

- Ask for the assistance of these contacts to identify and encourage appropriate members of the community to take part in a consultation exercise.

- Ask for the assistance of these contacts to formulate the content of the consultation.

- Respect the input of members of the ethnic communities, some of whom may be the development workers or management committee members of ethnic community groups. If the time input is substantial, offer to make a cash contribution to the relevant community groups to enable them to bring in temporary workers to share the workload.

Consultation

Use participatory consultation techniques. You can:

- Use professional consultants skilled in participatory techniques to design and run the consultations.

- Or you can use professionals to train identified members of the community to use participatory techniques and facilitate the consultation.

- Or identify someone within the ethnic community, not always possible, who has participatory consultation skills to run the session.

Discover Story Garden, Stratford – specialist play workers consulted with hundreds of young children and their families about their language development needs when designing a play area for a multi-lingual community.
Kafel Centre, Swansea - the Muslim community used an experienced member of the community to run a consultation day, in this case, to get ideas to create a new green space.

If you are starting off cold, having only established contact with a limited number of contacts to assist you, increase the stake of the community in your consultation effort:

- Identify a venue that belongs to an ethnic community group and pay them for the venue and catering.

- Get a designer and printer within the ethnic community to print a leaflet for you and consult with them re the content.

- Pay a fee to a youth group to get their members to physically go out and distribute them.

- Look for and replicate successful examples in which ethnic groups are given an attractive reason to come to a consultation and get involved.

Abbeyfield Park in Sheffield was under-used by the local ethnic groups. They proposed a music and cultural festival and work to involve all the ethnic groups in the area to take part. Months of engaging with the park, culminating in the festival, gave the ethnic groups a real sense of ownership.
Viewfinder Project, also in Sheffield, used photographic training combined with rigorous academic research to explore refugees' perceptions of green spaces using visual media.

Responding to consultation

There is now nothing more important than making some kind of positive response quickly:

- You do not need to respond immediately to everything but you must be seen to be responsive. Select some things that you can do and do them. Make sure ethnic groups hear about what you have done.

- Ensure you can feedback to everyone who took part in the consultation. Some may be happy to give you names and addresses. Additionally post the feedback on the notice boards of a range of ethnic community organisations local to the green space.

- Promote what you have done and lay down the basis for either more consultations in the future.

Follow up actions

Building a relationship is an ongoing thing. A first consultation is a significant breakthrough. Keep up the momentum but work at an achievable pace:

- A few people may be interested enough to form a working group with you. As part of the feedback, invite participants to put themselves forward.

- Be real. Follow up good ideas put forward by the participants. Address issues as you can, involving them in solutions. If there are things that you cannot do, explain why.

- As part of the feedback, make a date for a visit during which you can personally walk people around the green space and explain what is on offer

- If you have activities that need skills, offer taster programmes to newcomers to these activities as part of the feedback. For newcomers, inroads into new activities must be free. Very few people will pay for something they know nothing about. Once they are interested there are funding schemes such as Awards for All, to which disadvantaged groups can apply to fund whole programmes of activities.

- Make friendly visits to the new contacts you have made. Continue the conversation to give further information about your green space and the activities and opportunities available. Set the agenda for further involvement and take action together

Going into the future with confidence

Sometimes it is a tall order to expect immediate confidence from staff new to the area of work that is involving ethnic groups. Ensure that:

- Training is not just one off and that developmental support is available. Organisation support is in place.

- There is adequate commitment of resources in terms of personnel time, volunteers and cash.

- As a learning organisation you monitor, make time to review progress and attend to the development of this area of work.

- Give prestige and status to this work. Give space to it in your Annual Report. Be proud of your achievements. Flaunt them! Let everyone know.

As the work develops, it may be that the involvement of ethnic groups can also bring resources into the green space. Community groups can apply to funds such as Awards for All for the costs of taking part in activities or running activities such as festivals in a green space.

Further into the future, the use of the space and the benefits it gives to ethnic groups will result in ownership. Look forward to their future contribution as volunteers, and in time to come, as members of committees or your board.

Green spaces and education for biodiversity

Guidance Paper 4

The case for using urban green spaces as a focus for education for biodiversity has been made in the paper "Community Values - Maximising Community Contribution to Biodiversity through Urban Green Spaces". *Available on the BEN website.* In this guidance paper we will address some themes for development and what can be done to stimulate an awareness of biodiversity in urban green spaces.

The principal agencies responsible for action for biodiversity need to:

1. **Actively build awareness, understanding and commitment for action for biodiversity within the bodies and organisations responsible for green space development.**

The more obvious agencies include local authorities, voluntary nature conservation organisations, and educational institutions. Linking into these is not new but we need them to stimulate and renew their commitment. They are in charge of:

- urban parks
- city farms
- allotments
- commons
- cemeteries
- school grounds
- urban woodlands
- derelict land

The environmental sector is now positioning itself within a socio-cultural agenda. The new challenging targets are those in charge of community spaces who are on the edge of conversion to commitment to biodiversity and will be lifelong allies if won over. They need education themselves and dynamic stimulating resources at community level. These new diverse and numerous targets (residential social landlords, residents' associations, owners of garden centres, etc.) so very close to people's lives, are in charge of:

- council estate grounds
- housing association estates
- small children's playgrounds
- garden centres
- community centres with any patch of land
- horticultural community based projects
- gardens open to the public and visited for pleasure including those belonging to the National Trust or the Historic Houses Association
- specialist plant societies
- gardening clubs
- pocket spaces

- window boxes and balconies (where people with no land simply want to be in contact with flowers and plants)
- wherever people are given the opportunity to plant something

Confused Spaces, Balsall Heath, Birmingham – an inspirational project where local people desperate to brighten up a dismal area have permission to plant something in the most fragmented series of small spaces, down to 3 square feet of soil at a street corner

Those who are in charge of planning and designing green spaces, the education of future professionals, representative forums, and those facilitating input by the community also need to be made aware and won over to include elements which feed into education for biodiversity. These include:
- planners
- voluntary groups such as community design services or Planning Aid
- architects
- landscape designers
- urban forums
- relevant departments of universities and higher education institutions
- consultants specialising in running participatory consultation events

2. **Strategically create attractive combinations of indigenous plants for green spaces focused on demonstrating the range of issues around biodiversity.**

For interest, these plants need to be chosen to visually compete for attention against the popular love for the abundantly flowering and colourful garden plants.

Abney Park Cemetery, Hackney, E. London

Cashel Forest, Glasgow

Khalsa Wood, Nottingham

London Wetland Centre, Barnes, W. London

Lower Spen Nature Reserve, Ravensthorpe, W. Yorks

Minet Country Park, Southall, W. London

Rosehill Quarry, Swansea

In each of these examples, indigenous species supporting rich biodiversity are easily accessible to communities for educational projects.

3. **Build on the new thinking that garden plants are not second-class citizens to indigenous plants when it comes to providing opportunities for education for biodiversity.**
- Action for biodiversity does not just mean fighting for a corner to put in indigenous plants.
- In the urban areas, garden plants are much loved

and everywhere, from seasonal bedding in the Royal Parks, to roundabouts and window boxes on council estates. Education reaches most people when we start where people already are. Because of the fact that garden plants are plants and present in profusion in urban areas, they are the ultimate opportunity as a springboard for teaching processes relating to plants and therefore every principle of biodiversity to vast numbers of people.

- Garden plants have wildlife value. They bring people in contact with wildlife and build interest in wildlife and biodiversity. At the present time, the Countryside Council for Wales is piloting their "Plants for Wildlife" project in 3 partner garden centres in Wales. The project is based on a simple but powerful idea - plants which attract and significantly support wildlife have a Plant for Wildlife label in the pot, directing people to buy these if they like the idea of birds, butterflies etc. coming into their garden. Other supportive measures include educational displays and events at the garden centres.

Roots and Shoots, Vauxhall, S. London – combines local and global plant heritage to provide culturally relevant learning resources visiting school children, horticulture trainees and a range of community groups in a multicultural urban setting.

Reading International Solidarity Centre – this amazing edible roof incorporates a mix of native and exotic plants to illustrate principles of biodiversity, permaculture and sustainable development.

4. **Expand on labelling and interpretation.**

Select dramatic single specimens of either indigenous or garden plants and build in the biodiversity dimension among stories, jokes, and interesting or ridiculous traditions. The biggest tree in the neighbourhood, the plant with the funniest myth attached to it..... Yes, it is education, education, education, but lets have a range of essential serious stuff embedded effortlessly, entertainingly, and accessibly anywhere - those big words intellectual and physical access.

It is already happening. Countryside Council for Wales' Plants for Wildlife Project is a breakthrough for a statutory nature conservation agency, working with garden centres to promote any plant, native or introduced, that support wildlife. BTCV, with its Environment for All project works with a completely open approach with diverse communities, starting from where they are. Eden Project is exemplary. At the other end of the scale, voluntary sector organisations like Common Ground and Black Environment Network are shining community based examples working with huge networks combining imaginative social, cultural and environmental themes.

Hidden Garden, Glasgow – uses very beautiful art works to evoke spiritual connections among people and nature in a multi-faith context, showing how varied traditions have found meaning in the plants indigenous to their homelands

5. **Revive Earth Education programmes** and lead on training those in charge of green spaces to draw on it. The lively imaginative approach is much needed. Build on the method with new material centred on biodiversity.

Those in charge of green spaces need to:

- Become aware of their potential contribution to education for biodiversity, because urban green spaces embody plants and other features which can act as opportunities for education for biodiversity.
- Identify opportunities to incorporate plants that promote understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.
- Work with biodiversity organisations to consider and implement programmes of education around garden plants, leading to understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.

- Be aware that imaginative programmes of education for biodiversity not only play a vital role in the future of our planet and with it the future of all of us, but can also lead to enjoyment and enrichment of the quality of life of the vast numbers of urban bound people they are in touch with.

Can the tail wag the dog?

Urban green spaces are multiple use, diverse spaces. They are not in the main where action for biodiversity and habitat creation happens. But, we need to capitalise on the fact that urban green spaces give essential and numerous opportunities for promoting awareness and understanding of biodiversity within green spaces. This building block is vitally important.

A last question - can the tail wag the dog? Is there a focus within the green space community which will take on championing a place for education for biodiversity within urban green spaces, rouse the green space sector, and encourage the nature conservation and biodiversity organisations to get on with green space based and community based partnerships to achieve it? There are glimmers.

Increasing physical activity and promoting health and well-being
Guidance Paper 5

Linking health and the built and natural environment is a central theme for improving the health of ethnic minorities in Britain. Ethnic communities live in some of the worst environments. The resources within the education and environmental sectors are enormous but they have little or no access to them, e.g. Walking for Health programme, a vast range of outdoor activities.

This paper concentrates on opportunities for increasing physical activity within ethnic minority communities. Local green space can be a focal point for this work.

River Lea, Stamford Hill, E. London – Jewish boys decide they wish to learn rowing.

Mughal Garden, Lister Park, Bradford – Asian women doing healthy walking.

1. The necessity for outreach in relation to physical activities in the built and natural environment

Many outdoor activities, ranging from walking to horse riding in an urban or rural setting, are not on the agenda of ethnic communities - the "not for us" factor due to:

- Unfamiliarity and lack of opportunity to experience these.
- Lack of consistent nurturing of interest and provision of support to enter new areas of

endeavour. The image of ethnic communities as not being interested means that within the mainstream there is the "not for them" factor.

- Initial economic barriers. The fact is that no one will spend money to try something they know nothing about. However, many members of ethnic communities are rising into the middle class and can afford to pay for what they may become interested in. Even for groups that may not be able to afford such activities, there is the fact that even they can pay for them through fundraising if only they are interested.

2. Addressing barriers to taking part in outdoor activities

Nurturing initial interest, providing culturally sensitive opportunities, and consistently providing support are essential when introducing new activities. We introduced outdoor activities including horse riding to the Minority Ethnic Women's Network in South Wales about 4 years ago. Now there is a keen group of horse riders, and the group know about and take part in a range of physical activities including walking and horse riding. Recently they designed a programme of summer activities and successfully got a grant of £3000 from Awards for All to implement these independently.

- We introduced activities with a taster programme.
- We provided consistent support to the ethnic minority group including identifying where they can

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carry on with activities they are initially interested in, assisting with fundraising to continue activities, acting as facilitators to connect them to mainstream personnel and organisations who could support them.

- We acted as their representative supporting and negotiating with mainstream organisations to ensure they were welcome and that cultural aspects for engagement were known.
- We identified training needed to enable them to organise activities, build working relationships with relevant organisations, negotiate for what they needed and fundraising for themselves.

3. **Promotion and creation of relevant physical activities within the urban adult learning institutions**

Because of the unsympathetic outdoor environment in many of the deprived areas, and the fact that we cannot rely on the weather, indoor physical activities are important.

Many ethnic communities have forms of physical exercise as part of their culture, often integrated into their spiritual/religious/cultural systems. Some of these, yoga and Tai Chi, have become mainstream interests. However, we need to be aware that some of the ethnic minority groups, because of the spiritual and cultural context, will shy away from these "classes" because the classes are adapted to British needs. There is real scope for increasing physical activity through:

- Identifying and creating a greater range of classes around physical activity related to different cultures, consulting with ethnic community groups as to how they may be offered within the adult education institutions.
- Identifying the various age/gender groups that have specific interests and needs in relation to these and other mainstream physical activity classes.
- Identifying the possibility of running such physical activity classes at the premises of ethnic community groups, and other locations such as school halls near to where they live.

4. **Opening up activities in the outdoor environment through concrete action to recognise the legitimacy of ethnic minority presence and heritage in the built environment**

Ethnic communities are as a whole stressed by a feeling of rejection by the mainstream. Anything that promotes a sense of belonging and recognition of their legitimate presence contributes to their well-being and health. Very often, urban green spaces are the only significant pleasant spaces in which physical activities can take place. But many ethnic groups feel that they are not for them. We need to:

- Reach out to ethnic groups and make known to them that they are welcome to use green spaces. Unless there are substantial green spaces, the incorporation of use by newcomers is a negotiation.

- Social exclusion is a framework. Working for social inclusion disturbs that framework, particularly in small places where a scene can become set. e.g. someone is used to coming into a small park and sitting on a particular bench at a particular time of day. Suddenly they find a new ethnic minority person sitting there... they have to accept it that other people have a right too...and the ethnic minority person needs to feel comfortable. Mile End Park actually has to support various groups to claim this comfortable right to use space.

- Lister Park is a shining example of attending to the recognition of the presence of ethnic groups by consulting them in the regeneration of the park and investing significant sums to create a Mughal garden. Everyone now enjoys the Mughal garden, but for ethnic groups it is something special. It is a statement of commitment to them from the park, a setting that is cultural and concrete in their locality giving a sense of accepted belonging. Many Walking for Health Programmes have difficulties in unsympathetic surroundings of inner cities, but here a pleasant and cultural and large space has been created in continuity with the rest of the park. Every day at 8.30 in the morning you can witness over 50 ethnic minority women walking for health in Lister Park.

- In general create more pleasant spaces, and mark them as multicultural spaces, providing room for children to play, adults to walk, cycle, do exercise outdoors.

5. **Linking up locations for activities and encouraging people to walk to shop, to school and to work**

Although there may be pleasant spaces, many vulnerable members of ethnic minorities will not venture out because of issues of safety, cleanliness and general bleakness of the connecting streets and space. We need to:

- Make the general built environment more pleasant so that the sense of being in a pleasant place outside encourages people to be outside.

- Make streets and connecting areas safe to encourage people to be outside and to walk to school and to work. Over and over again we have heard for example that mothers with young children just do not want to breathe all the traffic fumes and walk along dirty littered streets to get to a nice park.

- Consult and nurture the capacity of ethnic groups to contribute to the shaping of the local environment that affects them most.

6. **Things to do outdoors and volunteering in the urban area and further afield into the countryside**

- Allotments and community gardens have already proved to be a great success to bring people outdoors and to do the many physical activities associated with it.

- Many locations such as inner city nature reserves, city fringe country parks and woodland, and the countryside further afield offer a whole range of activities, including volunteering. It is also particularly important to ethnic groups that have low income because so much of these are free. Benefiting from positive activity and access to nature is a major factor in increasing the quality of life of ethnic communities, and therefore their health and well-being. Such activities are crucial to lay down the basis for contact with and understanding of what it means to be part of the environment. It also brings ethnic communities out of isolation.

- Refer to point 1 above on the necessity for outreach and support to increase access and relevance of activities.

Cashel Forest, Glasgow – asylum seekers and refugees volunteer to plant trees

Minet Country Park, Southall, W. London – combines wildlife conservation and local amenity.

7. Health information, healthcare and environment

Information and understanding is a basis for participation and gives impetus to action. We need to:

- Put information where people are - in the case of ethnic groups they have named mosques, corner shops, post offices and schools as key places from which to pick up information.

- Places where healthcare is given are also important, in particular if it links into the state of health. Already GPs are aware of the Walking for Health programme. Information about all kinds of activities can appear at GP surgeries, baby clinics, be given to clients by Health Visitors who are in touch with all families with children under 5.

- Use events where physical activity is already happening and give even more information to those who are already taking part to become interested in a whole range of activities.

- Work in partnership with ethnic community groups and representative networks such as Black Environment Network to give information.

- Spend time with those who one can see will make good champions. They will be a great investment for spreading the word and increasing the numbers of people who begin to know about, understand and become in touch with opportunities.

- Increase representation through consultation and enabling ethnic groups to inform and take part in decision-making. Here capacity building is needed.

8. Employment opportunities

Unemployment and low income result in huge stresses on the health of many ethnic communities. There is a need to create opportunities for ethnic communities to aspire to enter employment in sectors new to them, such as the environmental sector. They are traditionally folded back into a narrow spectrum of employment due to discrimination and social exclusion.

In the effort to create opportunities for physical activities and promote these to ethnic communities, there lies an opportunity to provide employment in:

- Using skills within ethnic communities, e.g. around traditional forms of exercise.

- Using ethnic minorities for their community connections and skills to reach out to their own communities to promote physical activity.

Some statistics on social and environmental inequality and ethnic communities

- People living in the 44 most deprived areas in England named pollution, poor public transport and the appearance of the estate as major issues about where they live.

- The 44 most deprived areas in England contain 4 times more people from ethnic communities than other areas

- 66% of all cancer-causing chemicals emitted into the air come from factories in the most deprived 10 % of communities in England.

- Pollution is a major factor in poor health and health inequalities.

- People from ethnic minority backgrounds experience more health consequences from isolation and fear of crime in their local environment - instances of stress, depression, loss of appetite, increased alcohol consumption and lack of self esteem are consistently double in number compared to the population as a whole.

- Only 1 in 20 of people from ethnic minorities live in an area of low unemployment compared to 1 in 5 of white people. Minority ethnic people with A levels experience higher levels of unemployment than white people with no qualifications.

- Overall the ethnic communities have younger age structures than the white population. Different ethnic groups are experiencing inequality and increased disadvantage in education. Overall ethnic minority pupils make up 17% of exclusions from school while making up only 11 % of the school population. Only 4% of ethnic minority 16 year olds were in government training in 1994 compared to 13% of white young people of the same age.

- Open spaces are more accessible to ethnic minority children than any other leisure activity, but their satisfaction rates are lower, often related to fears over personal safety and racial abuse.

- Until recently much research on themes significant to ethnic minorities excluded references to them, resulting in a lack of essential information to steer policy on many fronts. Unease over the issue of ethnicity often results in professionals adopting colour-blind attitudes that ignore ethnic and cultural differences altogether.

The attitudes, interest or actions of different groups of people come into conflict at various times, resulting in particular groups of people feeling that they cannot use the space or do not want to use the space.

Territorial disputes

"With so many different groups using the space, Calthorpe Gardens has to try to be all things to all people. There have been territorial disputes in the past, but architect Robert Bishop has put some thought into sharpening the definition of spaces within the garden in order to accommodate multiple functions." *Calthorpe Gardens*

"We would like to see designated picnic areas and sports pitches in parks." *Concrete to Coriander: Bangladeshi Women's Gardening Group*

Some ways forward:

• Designing distinct areas for a range of different activities can help to reduce conflict

• Designating areas for specific activity can help to avoid conflict

Nuisance and threat

Communities subjected to repeated anti-social behaviour will understandably wish to reach for control as a solution. However, research from CABESPACE has shown that consistent positive measures to address how to link people positively to the place where they live are much more effective. CCTV or solid high walls to keep people out can send out a message that there are sections of the community that we have altogether given up on and sometimes provoke aggressive responses to tear these down. It is difficult to be patient and positive. Get support and access good practice by linking up with communities that have succeeded in transforming their situations. Local experts such as the community police, schools, youth services, or social services will already be in touch with the

problems. Link up with them to work together for a better local future.

Safety within green spaces

"Ethnic minorities are not using green spaces very much because of concerns about safety and security. In the Sikh community, parents go with children to play areas. They would like to let them go unsupervised but it is not safe. There is too much litter and vandalism. People are afraid of exposing their children to the risk of racism."

"Kenyan family I met 10 years ago would have liked simply to go to Sefton Park, but they felt unsafe to do so." *Liverpool Black and Ethnic Minority Forum*

"Vandalism is a problem, and fear of racist attacks. People are afraid of bullying, mugging and crime." *Nottingham Sikh Ladies' Group*

"No drug dealers, security guards in all the parks, like they have in the Palm House in Sefton Park."

"We would prefer it if parks and green spaces were safe and clean, free of litter. Some parks have been improved but many still need attention...."

"A green space should be a safe place for children to play. We need to protect our children from bad people". *Pepys Community Forum*

Some ways forward:

- People are put off using spaces when there has been a negative experience. Anticipation of a repeat of these experiences can make them give up using green spaces altogether. It is important to consult and discover what these are.

- Address local racism and other threats from people such as drug dealers or local bullies in partnership with appropriate agencies including for example local community groups, the police, social services, and youth services

- Women and children feel particularly vulnerable unless green spaces are properly designed and maintained with good safety features

- Work with organisations specializing in dealing with litter and vandalism, for example, Tidy Britain Campaign, community wardens, or community police. The presence of litter is not only about untidiness and dirtiness. It is also associated with the feeling that there are a lot of irresponsible people around. It adds to feelings of threat.

- The presence of park or green space warden, who may be trained volunteers, are very reassuring

Access routes to green spaces

"People feel exposed, we need improved approach roads, better access, lights, no cars...." *Liverpool Black and Ethnic Minority Forum*

"I wouldn't go to green spaces alone, wouldn't go at night."

"There are dense bushes and dark corners where problems may lurk. These need to be addressed urgently. There could be more attractive features like footpaths, way-markers, benches, and colourful blossom trees. There could also be better safety features such as fences and gates, security cameras at car parks more / better bins."

Some ways forward:

- Consult local people re their feelings about the way they get to green spaces and work with the Local Authority and other relevant organisations such as Reclaim the Streets to ensure that key approaches to a green space are pleasant and safe.

- Work with the local police and other relevant organisations if there are feelings of threat from racists, drug dealers etc.

- Invest in good design

Dogs and dog mess

"Dogs not on leads"

"Getting hands filthy in the muck" *Barnhill, Moss Side, Manchester - focus group*

"Some families have commented that they would love to use the secluded, natural areas for prayers, but they would be concerned about, for instance, encountering dog-walkers or the evidence of them. Issues such as this would need to be addressed if the community park truly wants to become a resource for all." *Rose Hill Quarry*

Some ways forward:

- Although dog walking is often listed as a green space activity by participants of BEN focus groups, when asked "what puts you off using and caring for green spaces", one of the most frequent responses from ethnic community groups are around dogs. Some Muslims avoid the possibility of contact with dogs because they believe they are unclean.

- People feel unsafe in terms of health if places are dirty. For sheer reasons of hygiene, it is desirable that there should be areas of green spaces fenced off so that they are free of dogs. Many European parks do this, as part of the awareness that diseases can be picked up from dog mess, and that people, in particular parents with young children want to sit on and play on the grass.

- Working with dog owners to eliminate dog mess is something that everyone wants.

- Areas can be negotiated with dog owners to designate them as places in which dogs may run free. This has benefits for many people, but especially for local Muslims who feel unable to use a space because dogs run free over the entire space.

A wide-ranging and relevant programme of activities and events

Guidance Paper 7

A wide-ranging and relevant programme of activities and events not only brings more people in. It can also ameliorate situations of conflict, address perceived issues of safety, and pre-empt actions or incidents so that they may not occur. Notional presence or dominance of the space by particular groups of people can be very off-putting. The probability of their presence and the anticipation of unpleasantness or danger that may be caused by them means that vulnerable groups will shy away from coming to the space, e.g. the fear caused by the knowledge that aggressive racists or local bullies use a space.

Activities and events can be designed with the aim of addressing the need for support, changing perception and attitudes or bring people together. They can, over time, change the atmosphere of a green space, enable relationships between target minority groups and members of mainstream groups, and promote access to green spaces by vulnerable people.

Varied activities and different areas to do them in

"Group activities are good, because women and children may feel unsafe to out alone, but if you go together, you can enjoy the company and support."
Nottingham Sikh Ladies' Group

"There needs to be a wide range of activities on offer to suit different types of people within the community – for instance older people may have different interests and needs than young people. We need more choice."

"We would like to see more attractions and activities in green spaces, to keep children from getting bored, things for people to see and do such as poetry, dancing (traditional Sikh dances and English country dancing), horse riding, martial arts, fruit picking."
Nottingham Sikh Ladies' Group

"A lot of problems are caused where play facilities are restricted to younger age groups, children 10-18 age group are not catered for. There is a need for adventure play ground, skate park, go-karting etc, but we meet local opposition and council resistance."
Liverpool Black and Ethnic Minority Forum

Ways forward:

- Appropriate activities for different age groups, and for different needs and wishes are important, in order to avoid clashes between youths and older people, or between children of different ages

- Working with local community groups and organising, publicizing or encouraging group activities is important for individuals who feel vulnerable..Green spaces are very important for women with pre-school age children as somewhere to go during the day. At the Liverpool BEM Forum, people gave examples of activities that they had seen in other cities – New York's Central Park, parks in Paris, play areas in Amsterdam – where the spaces are well used by many people doing various pastimes, so it feels safer e.g. boules, chess, boating, arts projects, educational activities, circus.

- Events enable many people to use green space in a community atmosphere. Sometimes it is easier for individuals and groups new to a space to be introduced to it through an event. Sometimes it is easier for individuals and groups new to a space to be introduced to it through an event. Every single use of a space increases familiarity and therefore contributes to a sense of safety.

Culturally relevant activities

"We would like to do more horse riding, because that links to our heritage. The guru fought on horseback, and his devotees would donate the best quality horses. Young people would learn to fight with sticks and swords, first on foot and then on horseback." *Nottingham Sikh Ladies' focus group*

"Festivals such as Mardi Gras, help make people from different communities feel welcome."

"The waterfront in Liverpool is seen as a particularly democratic / multi-cultural space, although the Chinese and Japanese gardens have been removed." *Liverpool Black and Ethnic Minority Forum*

"What would encourage us to become more involved? Cultural relevance, for example a mandala or plants from different countries – like at the Eden Project. *Pepys Community Forum*

Ways forward:

- Culturally relevant activities and features bring meaning and engagement with green space.

- Green space managers need to be aware of how spaces are perceived and therefore their potential role in the recognition of cultural identity.

- Culturally familiar activities enthuse members of ethnic communities, make a connection with their history and motivate them to take part. Engaging them in planning such events can unlock knowledge and skills and raise their status as contributors.

New activities in new spaces

"Before the improvements, the Al Hilal Muslim Community Centre garden was unfenced and used as a short cut by people passing through the area. It suffered a lack of sense of ownership. Once it was

fenced, the community began to take responsibility for picking up litter and watering plants. It became worthwhile for people to volunteer, as they could see progress resulting from their efforts. But it was very hard to get initial funding for the project, as it was seen as exclusively for the Muslim community. However, the benefit to the wider community is noticeable now, as there is a significant visual improvement to the appearance of the whole area." *Al Hilal Mosque and Community Centre*

"Some people support us, some oppose us. It can be demoralizing. We need respect and support, acknowledgement for our contribution, not to feel sidelined. Listening and responding to our comments increases our zeal." *Pepys Community Forum*

"We have planted an orchard of fruit trees and we are looking forward to when they mature and bear fruit, so that people can come and pick the fruit." *Nottingham Sikh Ladies' focus group*

Ways forward:

- The views of local people, in relation to their needs, should be represented to those in power, including local councils. The Community Strategy is a vehicle for this.

- Many smaller green spaces cannot solve their problems by trying to provide a full range of activities and different spaces for them because they are limited by their size. Therefore overall local needs can only be addressed through a network of different local spaces doing different things. Local green spaces should work with each other to address the range of activities and types of spaces needed.

- Communities need support to help them have a new vision to take up opportunities to transform unused open spaces and take responsibility for plots of land given to their care.

- The views of local people, in relation to their needs, should be represented to those in power, including local councils. The Community Strategy is a vehicle for this.

Supporting representation within decision making structures

Guidance Paper 8

A positive climate for ethnic inclusion

The Duty to Promote Race Equality is now in place. The trend within policy at the highest level continues to urge all organisations to make efforts to put into place the representation of the interests of ethnic communities in decision-making processes, in particular on committees and advisory groups. In the near future, there will be an explosion of opportunities for socially excluded groups to participate in policy and decision making structures. We need to address emergent problems now so that these groups can reap the full benefit of the opportunities.

A framework to enable the representation of socially excluded groups

The demand for representatives to come forward to take the first seats on significant committees and task forces has already begun. At the same time, the effect of a missing supporting framework that will enable such representatives to play a full role is obvious. Without the offer of support, only the most confident representatives will consent to attempt to blaze the trail.

The characteristics of socially excluded groups

Socially excluded groups, including ethnic groups, are as a whole by their nature not fully organised and represented by a range of constituted organisations. They are therefore often seen as "hard to reach".

The existing organisations that aim to represent their issues and interests are in the main seen as 'unfashionable' causes. The result is that they are mostly chronically unstable as organisations: under-funded, overworked, under-staffed, and under-resourced.

The organisations that represent socially excluded groups are in constant touch with their clientele and are trusted. They are aware of current issues and opportunities for development.

The enduring organisations which represent socially excluded groups are however mostly outstanding. The individuals heading them and their staff are in the main highly motivated, idealistic, talented, and visionary.

The enduring organisations that represent socially excluded groups tend to be strategically small, and very focused in their aims. Their delivery usually stretches their staff to their limits.

Many socially excluded groups are minorities. The organisations that represent them are in even smaller numbers.

Issues arising out of the characteristics of organisations representing socially excluded groups

They are the key, the essential partners, to developments regarding the involvement of socially excluded groups.

They have particular developmental needs to begin to play an extensively resourced role re socially excluded groups because they are modelled in the survival mode.

They are so small and tightly staffed that to remove any member of staff consistently, say two to three days a month, has implications on the delivery of their normal programme of work.

The experience of arrival, onto committees and advisory groups, of representatives of social groups who are not used to participating in power structures, is intimidating. It involves a huge cultural learning curve. Unsupported, the experience of being newly included remains an experience of social exclusion.

The small numbers of organisations are asked over and over again to spread themselves across an overwhelming number of demands for their input. This scenario is ultimately untenable.

The characteristics of the present unsatisfactory framework for representation of socially excluded groups

Members of excluded social groups are invited with the status of individuals onto committees and task forces. There is a denial of the fact that they have been invited because of their position within these organisations, that they are able to draw on their structures and their contacts with socially excluded groups.

The constant requests to input views that depend on consultation with socially excluded groups impact enormously on the associated organisations that have to assist in the identification of participants for consultation exercises. These are demanded with breakneck deadlines, a scenario within which an organisation is expected to drop everything it is doing in order to deliver.

Organisations representing socially excluded groups are held to ransom. Have they not worked for long years hoping to arrive at the corridors of power and influence? Are they going to give up these invitations to play a role to change the lives of their client groups for the better? Under such circumstances, there is initially a huge effort made by the more confident representatives of socially excluded groups to accommodate the work that comes with acceptance of positions within committees and advisory groups. But, as the longer-term effects set in, many individuals and organisations will not be able to cope with the consequences of overload. They are destined to drop away.

A call to action to put into place a supportive framework for the representation of socially excluded groups

There is an urgent need to address the resourcing of individuals and organisations, and to provide support so that they can play a full role in representing the interests of socially excluded groups.

The essential elements are:

Beyond bare expenses, to move towards resourcing which covers the value of the work delivered by individuals and organisations representing socially excluded groups in policy and decision-making structures. If members of such organisations are taken away from their essential work, the organisation must be resourced to backfill this work.

The development of support and mentoring frameworks to support and nurture individuals and organisations representing socially excluded groups so that they can be enabled to subsequently and consistently play a full role in policy and decision-making structures. Examples of possible developments include:

• Buddying and mentoring systems within an organisation

• Systematically identifying the incidental training and support needs of these representatives, with a budget and human resources allocated to attend to these as appropriate

• Inter-organisational support group or network bringing together members of socially excluded groups newly playing a role on committees and advisory groups

• Sector wide recognition of and response to these needs, e.g. setting up of a support network where individuals can share experience, and where there may be a fund resourcing training needs

Moving into the future

At present, most of the time individuals are offered mere expenses of travel and subsistence and nothing else. Under-resourced organisations are constantly picking up the bill for working alongside well-resourced institutions of power. Without considering a supportive framework to enable and maintain participation in representation of socially excluded groups, the explosion of demand for representation of socially excluded groups, which we are already experiencing, is destined to fail.

For a relatively small investment of cash and human resources, a huge prize for social inclusion is waiting to be won.

Examples of representatives from ethnic communities in decision-making structures are rare, particularly in the field of green space management, but include:

George's Park, Lozells, Birmingham – where women and children run the Friends group.

St Agnes Park, Bristol – where the Friends group mainly comprises African Caribbean people.

Terminology matters

Guidance Paper 9

This discussion and guidance paper is written in response to the recently increased use of the phrase "Black and Asian" in the press and media and within major institutions when referring to issues which relate to all ethnic minority communities. It also aims to stimulate consideration when using terminology to describe social groups within our society who originating from different parts of the world.

The meaning of terms used in day-to-day language is constantly evolving. It also changes according to the local context. The consequence is that there is a range of terms and meanings across the country. It is therefore important at a national level to use terms that result in a common meaning as far as is possible.

- "Black and Asian" is not inclusive terminology with regard to the diverse cultures in multicultural Britain. It makes many groups feel excluded, and indeed offended as a result of feeling excluded by those who they see as people who have been given the responsibility to work towards including them. It excludes people from white and other minority ethnic cultures in Britain.

- BEN has found that the term "Black" used on its own, particularly if not capitalised, is felt by different dark-skinned groups from different origins to be unrepresentative of their identity. How black is

"Black"? How does it relate to mixed race persons? Here lies one of the major issues of the day - multicultural diversity embodied in single persons.

- Many Africans feel that the term "Black" means Afro-Caribbean and excludes them. Most of the population feel that "Black" means Afro-Caribbean. Caribbean ethnic groups such as the Chinese and Asians hailing from Trinidad, or Arabs from Jamaica feel they are always excluded under the term "Afro-Caribbean".

- To add to the confusion, various organisations and researchers are using the word "Black" as defining only particular ethnic groups of their choice. They feel it is acceptable because the groups they refer to are clearly identified in each document.

- If "Black and Asian " is seen as an adequate term because Asians (defined as Asians from the Indian Sub-continent) and Afro-Caribbean are recognised as the majority in numbers among ethnic minorities, we would then be falling into line with institutions which claim that as white people are in the majority it is OK to ignore the rest, since most people are included.

- "Asian" is an accepted popularised British misuse of the original word that is a geographical term. Before this misuse of the term "Asian" had become

accepted, many ethnic minority groups that originate from the continent of Asia were extremely upset. Ambiguity still remains in the popular understanding of the meaning of the term. Awareness of this scenario has led to the term "South Asian" or the full phrase "Asians from the Indian Sub-continent" to express what the popularised term "Asian" means in Britain - it excludes the Chinese, the Thai etc. who also come from the continent of Asia.

• The Indian sub-continent itself embraces many politically, ethnically and culturally diverse groups with distinct identities.

Certain people propose that the term 'ethnic' describes everyone. Technically it is true that everyone has an 'ethnic origin' - it appears in everyone's doctor's case notes for example. But in the real world, the day-to-day use of the term "ethnic" and "minority ethnic" describes cultures other than the majority white British culture. In the main, everyone is able to cite correctly who is being talked about when the terms "ethnic communities", "ethnic minorities", "minority ethnic cultures", or "ethnic cultural heritage" are used. Of course we need to discuss and develop terminology. However, we cannot ignore the fact that we can communicate to society at large only through contemporary popular language. For the time being, "ethnic" and "minority ethnic" are still the most useful, inclusive and socially meaningful descriptive terms.

When Black Environment Network was first formed, we went into prolonged discussions re terms, and found that the terms "Black" and "ethnic minorities" change in meaning and acceptability as one moved across the regions of Britain. In highly politicised Merseyside, nearly all ethnic minority groups united under the term "Black" used as a political term to describe all those who do not belong to the white mainstream population. However, in other areas such as in the West Midlands, we were told by many groups that as they were not dark enough to be deemed "black" they found it very awkward to ever identify with the term. Various groups also resented the term "ethnic" because they understood it to describe "peasants", "exotic but uneducated people". Many groups ultimately want to be accurately described as themselves, for example Bangladeshi, Nigerian or Iraqi, and not as a homogenous group of "ethnic minorities". They rightly feel that their specific needs are often not attended to because they are described as a general mythical other.

It is true that we cannot get it right for everyone and the aim of this paper is to stimulate the necessary discussion. The national debate is at an early stage. Maybe more consensus or even new terms may emerge as the conversation matures. In the meantime, for all of us, a decision has to be made re the terminology which one uses. The position of an

organisation is ultimately known by promoting the context within which it works. By all means gravitate to a term of your choice. Include your definition in key leaflets and papers, and promote it in association with your work. BEN itself gravitated to using the term "black" symbolically in its name, always stating what we mean by it - BEN uses the term "black" symbolically, recognising that the Black communities are the most visible of all ethnic communities. We work with black, white and other ethnic communities.

When referring to research or academic documents, look for a definition when the terms " Black", "Black and Asian", "multicultural" etc. are used. The meaning of terminology vary, for reasons ranging from particular academic definitions, differing understandings and positioning of the organisations concerned, to the practical declaration of boundaries for a piece of research. Certain organisations may define terms in relation to the issue they are trying to address. When referring to older documents, it is useful to be aware of the definition/understanding of the terms as used at that time. Definitions do put the content in context for you, e.g. The Arts Council document "Achieving the Arts of England's Culturally Diverse Communities (1999)" defines "Black" as follows: "Black refers to people of African, Caribbean, Asian and Chinese origins in accordance with the Arts Council's 1994 definition of cultural diversity".

In the main, BEN has moved away from the term "ethnic minorities", preferring to use the term "ethnic communities" and "ethnic community groups", because although in the UK context its meaning is clear, when working regionally or locally, in a significant number of cases, the ethnic 'minorities' are the majority local population. In all, our opinion is that "ethnic communities", "ethnic groups", "minority ethnic culture" and "ethnic minorities" still feature as the most useful and inclusive terms.

"Black and minority ethnic groups" or BME groups has recently become an officially preferred term. There are many valid reasons for which "Black" groups fought to gain the status of being named as needing a separateness within the range of ethnic minority groups.

This understandably creates tension within the range of ethnic minority groups, as the contemporary socio-political scenario is constantly shifting the balance. For example, at the present times, since September 11, there is a real case for giving particular attention to Muslim groups. The fact is, that being named as a category within officialdom does switch on targeted strategic action and resources.

When one is working locally, the best policy is to approach community groups to assess the local picture and find out exactly how they wish to be described.

Considering translation
Guidance Paper 10

Simplistically, translation is just putting text from one language into another. But, careful consideration is needed if translating something is to result in serving a purpose. This paper addresses some of the contexts driving the consideration for translation.

Some key questions and points for consideration

1. What information should be translated?

- No organisation can translate everything. The cost would be prohibitive. It is unnecessary in various instances. Sometimes other ways of communicating are preferable.

- Thought needs to be given as to what the purpose of the information is, and what the needs of the target groups are. Translation is not a tick box item for provision of information to particular ethnic minority groups.

- Some ethnic minority groups may specifically request the translation of a particular item because they feel that it is of significant relevance to them. It is important that such requests are carefully considered.

- Translated words can also be a symbolic gesture of the recognition of cultural presence, even for

groups which do not need translation, e.g. a leaflet on planting trees may incorporate the word "tree" in many languages in its design while the main information is in English.

2. How can organisations work to achieve communication with ethnic groups with varying degrees of understanding of English?

- Organisations need to have local knowledge of the different ethnic minorities present in the area, plus their own perception of their needs and wishes. Very often what may be necessary is the establishment of a dialogue with the community group's key worker rather than translation for members of a particular group.

- Some ethnic minority groups stem from an oral tradition and may wish to have tapes or videos instead of translated text.

- Communication is a two-way exercise. Translated information going one way can be unsatisfactory. An information session with an interpreter is one way of beginning and building up a real dialogue. In a green space this may take the form of taking a walk together, and giving information and

answering questions about the space with the support of the community group's key worker and if necessary a professional interpreter.

Members of the group Concrete to Coriander, in a BEN focus group session, said:

"We would like organisations to give information in plain straightforward English. We can almost always find someone in our group to translate for us"

"We would like the managers of public places, such as green spaces or libraries, to send key messages and access information in community languages to our community organisations"

"We would like telephone numbers, dates and addresses in English because that is the form that helps us most when we need to use it or to find places"

"When possible pictures, images or symbols should be used instead of words for signage"

3. What forerunning and follow up work do organisations need to do?

- Introduction of new subject matter of interest, or new activities need to go hand in hand with the provision of information. We are inundated with information. Information that seems irrelevant to us is seen as junk mail. For many ethnic groups, information about activities or subject matter with which they have had no contact will result in no response.

- If material such as grant applications are translated, does it imply that ethnic minority groups may expect to be able to communicate with organisations in their community languages? This must be made clear on the translated material. There are services, at a cost, which provide three way conversations, with the organisational personnel, the client and an interpreter to facilitate communication. Language Line in Birmingham is one such service.

Translation alongside the building of a working relationship with ethnic minority groups

Translation cannot stand-alone. The crucial context for successful communication with any ethnic minority group is the building of a consistent working relationship and therefore a continuing dialogue. The relationship will enable the organisation and the ethnic community group to get to know each other and learn from each other.

- Through a continuing working relationship, specific needs for translation can be identified and solutions found in partnership with the key workers of ethnic community groups.

- It should be recognised that most ethnic community groups are under-resourced. Whenever possible, ethnic community groups should be paid for specific assistance:

- Consider whether the information to be translated needs professional translation, or translation at a community level. Out of goodwill ethnic community groups often translate information that benefits their members for free, and put it into their newsletters. Offering to contribute to part of the cost of the printing of newsletters that include your information is a good way of supporting ethnic groups.

- When possible, pay for the time ethnic groups spend in assisting you to communicate successfully. Ethnic groups can assist you in ensuring that the content of translated information is culturally sensitive and relevant. They can assist in identifying where to distribute information, and in distributing translated information. They can assist in designing the process of a consultation session.

- When you need to consult with members of ethnic communities, use the premises of community groups and therefore contribute towards their costs. Make a payment to the community organisations when they have arranged for members of ethnic community groups to facilitate the process. This supports the community group, and enables individual members' contribution to their community to be recognised.

- For many occasions where the information is not technical, the uses of ordinary bilingual members of the community as interpreters may be adequate. A small donation may be made to the community organisation.

- Use opportunities around communication to support the community group and to build their capacity, e.g. financing training to enable members of ethnic community groups to gain more facilitating skills may enable both the community group and your organisation to communicate more successfully.

Forming a strategy for communication

- Consider the remit of your organisation and the points where it interfaces with particular ethnic minority groups.

- Involve appropriate local ethnic minority groups in identifying how best you can fulfil your aims through communication with information and what forms these can take. If appropriate bring in expert advice to facilitate this process, e.g. working with Black Environment Network.

- Involve appropriate local ethnic minority groups in the roles they can play in assisting you to communicate successfully.

- Build the capacity of ethnic community groups to work together with you whenever opportunities arise. This includes familiarising the group with how your organisation and the sector you work within operates, as well as providing training opportunities in relation to particular skills.

- Recognise the input of ethnic minority groups, and when possible pay for their services and specific inputs, thereby supporting ethnic community groups while fulfilling your own aims.

Working with the media and ethnic groups
Guidance Paper 11

Working with the media nationally and locally is an important part of connecting ethnic minority groups to green spaces. When working with ethnic minority groups, one must be aware that there are many vulnerable groups and individuals who may be sensitive to public exposure. Steps must be taken to protect their interests and thereby to ensure an ongoing positive relationship with them.

1. Identifying sympathetic media personnel

When reading newspapers, magazines and viewing different media, take note of sympathetic presentations of ethnic minorities by the media, and make contact with relevant personnel to develop a working relationship that you can use on appropriate occasions. Consult local ethnic minority groups to tap into their connections and their views of media, especially locally.

2. Identifying opportunities

Look at your programme of work and activities and identify if there are opportunities to publicise aspects of it that are of particular interest to ethnic minority groups. Consult relevant groups to talk about your ideas and the opportunities you have spotted. Ask them for their views and assistance, e.g. you may get a first visit by a group of young children and their parents and there is for example a falconry display. Talk to the group leader to see if he or she can talk to particular parents to get their permission for their children to be photographed, with the aim of putting the photo into local organisations' newsletters.

3. Making a decision on media presence

- A group may be vulnerable and not wish to have the presence of the media. Sometimes a group may make the wrong decision about itself, and the final decision should also include the judgement of the organising organisation, e.g. BEN or HHA, assessing whether their presence might be detrimental to the process of engagement that it wishes to happen.
- The suggestion may be varied to give the group choices in how they engage with the media, e.g. instead of a constant presence throughout the activities, it may be arranged that the journalist or photographer is present only at the end of the visit

so that the process of engagement is not interrupted.

- The organising organisation should be present, and at their discretion stop inappropriate questions. Only particular more confident members of the group will answer questions or pose for photos. Not all of them need to do it.

4. Briefing community groups

Talk to their representative about:

- The purpose for the media presence, e.g. to promote the project to other organisations and community groups, and that their consent to share their experience is a contribution to the opening up of activities to others.
- How and where the photos will be used, one-off or to be used again in the future. Children under 16 need their parents to consent to use of photos.
- Whether they want their details as a group published. Sometimes groups prefer to be anonymous so they cannot be identified by location. Other groups see acknowledgement of group name etc. as a kind of recognition of their input.
- The fact that they do not have to answer questions they are unhappy about, that they can designate only particular members of the group to answer questions or have photos taken. They can stop any of the media activities at any time if they are unhappy about it.
- They can comment on the setting or the way photographers want to pose them and have their input as to what they want and see as important to show.
- Whether he or she has actually consulted the people to be involved. The community group must be happy about the arrangements you wish to make.
- The details of the arrangement. Times and dates must be written down. Even if it is given over the phone, you must write to re-confirm. If you are making efforts towards an arrangement such as a photo opportunity, you must double check that they will be turning up in the right place at the right time.

5. Briefing journalists and photographers etc.

- Photos that are portrait-like are not acceptable. Groups should never look straight into the camera. The focus must be the activity. Focus on settings that point to issues or subject matter that are important to highlight.
- Brief them on the purpose of the project and get them on side to assist us in getting the right messages across. Give them a written brief outline of the aims of the project and the process we are taking the organisations and groups through. Include any notes on particular cultural sensitivities in relation to different ethnic groups.
- If there were time, the community groups would like to see and comment on the text and photos.
- Ask for copies of whatever is published.

6. Dealing with problems

Whatever you do, sometimes there will be unforeseen upsets and problems. Remember that if you have an ongoing positive relationship with an ethnic group, things can always be sorted out. Groups understand that it is not possible to know everything - mistakes may be made on either side and everyone will learn for the future. Groups can get it wrong too, e.g. they may get dates or times wrong and not turn up when you have made great efforts to arrange for a photo opportunity.

When dealing with problems:

- Arrange to see them face-to-face. Do not try to sort things out from a distance.
- Agree any remedial steps, listening carefully to their wishes and checking back that you have understood what they have expressed correctly. e.g. there may be an apology in a local newsletter, or a letter written directly to the offended party by someone high up in your own organisation.
- Continue to work with the group, making regular contact like you always have. Do not shy away because there has been a problem. Look to the future.
- Realise that sometimes problems arise because we simply cannot control what happens with the media altogether. And, even sympathetic media personnel can also get it wrong. They may not have time to always check back before their own tight deadlines. In such cases it is important to empathise with the ethnic community group, showing clearly that you understand what has happened and that you are on their side. Do what you can, e.g. contact the media personnel who have caused the problem and explain clearly what has happened. Try to get them to write to apologise even if no more can be done. Often, sympathetic media people who have made a mistake will try harder to do something to support ethnic minority groups. It may result in more publicity.

7. Last of all - make it all fun!

Everyone likes good publicity that celebrates their presence, their culture or their contribution, or which gives new information and promotes opportunities to be involved. It is fun for ethnic minority groups to work with the media when everything goes well. It is the way it should be.
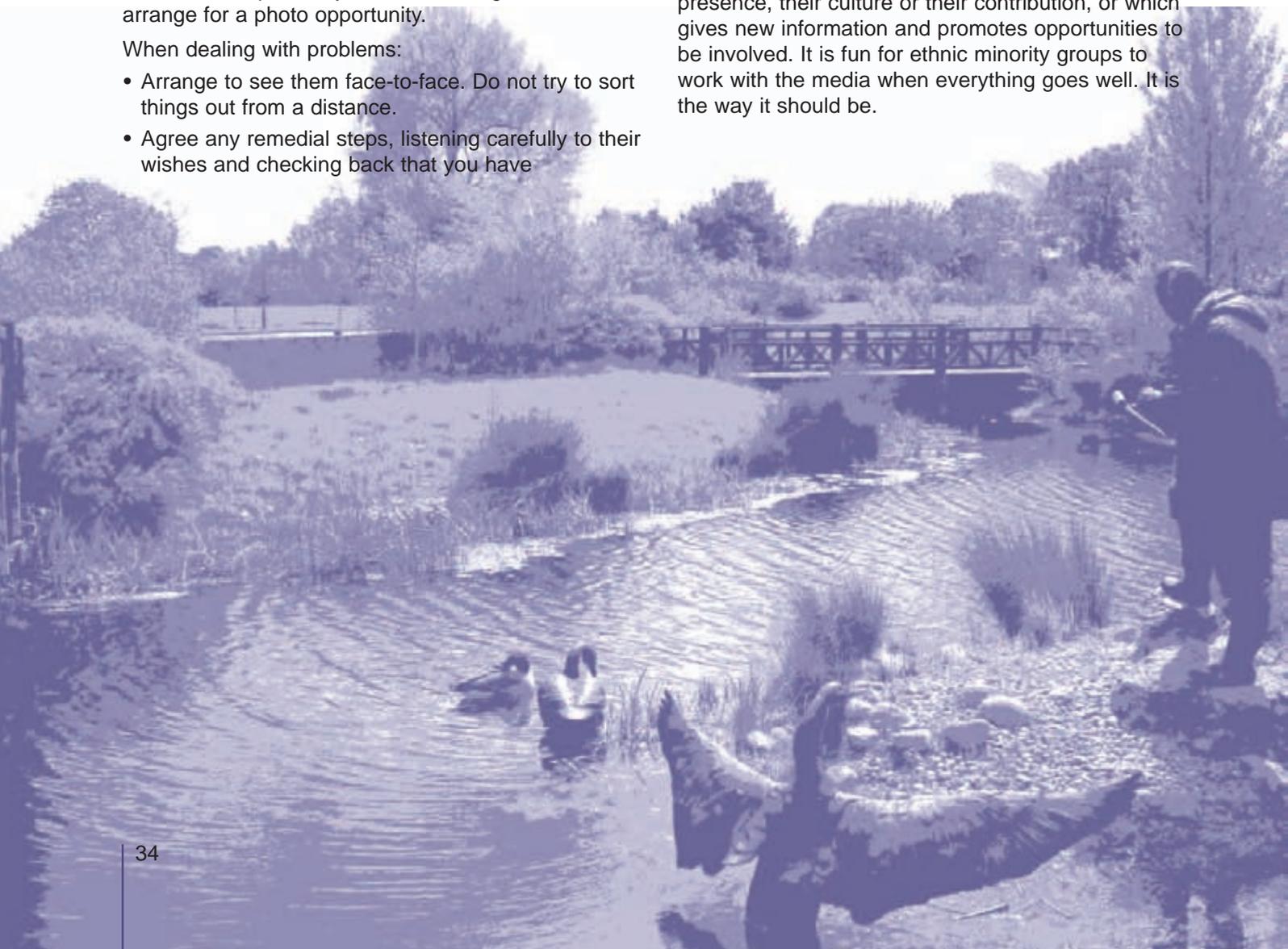
Informal learning and pathways to employment
Guidance Paper 12

Green spaces are settings that can purposefully offer a range of opportunities to encourage and enable informal learning leading to lifelong interests, a return to education or aspiration to work towards a career.

Interpretation and associated activities

Lively interpretation can stimulate new interests, especially if they are designed to link into a range of activities that build on the themes raised. Interpretation can be seen as a dynamic element of the space, not necessarily a permanent expensive high quality feature. During a visit to Australia I came across nature reserves in which there were numbered weatherproof boxes for different areas, with attractive cheaply produced information sheets on plants, wildlife, plant history or local history. A facility like this allows you to change interpretation themes, when appropriate in consultation with community groups. e.g. for Black History Month. It also allows people to take something away. The information sheet will work for you in the community.

Ways forward

- Purposefully stimulate new interests through dynamic interpretation
- Consult communities to identify themes and work with them
- Link interpretation to activities to develop interests

Guided walks, talks, training

Guided walks and talks directly connect you with members of the community. Work with local groups to develop themes. As more people become interested, get volunteers from different communities trained up to do guided walks and talks in different languages.

Organising a programme, media work, photographing and documenting activities, evaluating outcomes - there is a whole raft of skills for which training can be provided to build people's capacity to contribute. There are funders specifically interested in strengthening communities and the voluntary sector. Be integrational in your approach. Benefit members of ethnic groups and other disadvantaged groups alongside each other.

Ways forward

- Research local community groups who can work with you
- Train new volunteers
- Build the capacity of ethnic groups to make a full contribution

Local knowledge and skills

Unlock the dormant knowledge and skills with ethnic community groups. Many groups hail from the countryside of their countries of origin and come from communities that use plants in everyday life and for medicine. Many of them have knowledge and practical skills in cultivation and care of the natural environment, which they can share with the mainstream community.

Research local ecologists, archaeologists or wildlife enthusiasts to work with you. Arrange walks and talks which create a deepened interest in what is there in your space. Take people beyond your space as well. Go to zoos, local nature reserves, museums, or urban studies centres.

Again, spot the bright sparks. We all have an overwhelming workload. Once people are interested,

purposefully let them take over and do the organising for you!

Ways forward

- Unlock knowledge and skills within ethnic communities
- Research other local people and organisations that can work with you
- Consider a programme with elements beyond your space

Volunteering

As you work with individuals and community groups, let them know what it is that you need help with. Volunteering is still a formal sounding work. Closer to the community it is basically about a sense of the willingness and joy of helping each other out. For example, see your green space as a meeting place where people can sit and talk outdoors, pending good weather! Isn't it much nicer for a mother's group to be able to sit on the grass or benches to share information than in a meeting room? You may make the effort of letting them come in and make tea to take out. These are the small actions that build up a relationship and set the context for you to ask them to do things for you.

Many members of ethnic communities do not have the experienced of focussed volunteering activities and there is a need to introduce how these work. Organisations such as BTCV or Groundwork will be happy to work with you to introduce what they do to the community groups you are in touch with.

Ways forward

- Build up a give and take relationship with the local community
- Work with others to increase different forms of volunteering in and beyond your space

Reward volunteers and involve local organisations and businesses

Organise activities and events to reward those who work with you. Thank them and give them credit and status. The Country Parks in Hong Kong give volunteers who give substantial time uniforms, badges, beautifully designed T-shirts.

Get local businesses or organisations to sponsor events, barbecues or picnics, e.g. your local Wildlife Trust may wish to use the occasion to get their messages across. Get a local personality, your MP, your local bank or business to present certificates or badges. They want to build relationships with the local communities too.

Ways forward

- Engage local businesses, organisation, politicians and personalities
- Give concrete recognition to work done and knowledge and skills gained

Linking into community education and lifelong learning

Lifelong learning and community education is a priority at the moment. Research local institutes and see if some of your activities will bring them new students for evening classes or other courses. Inform your community on your community information board.

Local educational institutes may be interested in linking into your activities and the community groups you are working with in order to expand what they have to offer to their students. Hammersmith and West London College was so inspired by the range of environmental activities undertaken by ethnic communities that it decided to stimulate activities within the college around sustainability. The real life experience alongside academic activity put their students into a different league. The rate of acceptance into further education and university was so significantly enhanced that they have now put into place a full time co-ordinator for this aspect of student life.

Ways forward

- Link with local educational institutions

Opening up opportunities for employment

Ethnic communities are known to go into a relatively narrow band of employment. The lack of role models within small communities and the subsequent lack of knowledge of the wide range of careers available means that often, environmental careers are not on their agenda.

At the moment there is a real lack of gardening and horticultural skills within the green space sector. Make this and other employment opportunities known. Allow interested youngsters to shadow your employees. Refer people to other organisations that are willing to do the same.

Any emerging interest in knowledge and skills is a basis for a return to education and the consideration of a range of employment. It may start from the work you do in your green space and end up anywhere. Opening out opportunities is about not having a narrow view.

Ways forward

- Introduce the employment opportunities available
- Be explicit about how the activities you run link into employment possibilities
- Work with local educational institutions to promote knowledge about educational opportunities and the qualifications needed for particular jobs
- Offer experiences such as job shadowing

Contribution to examples of good practice

Abbeyfield Park Multicultural Festival – Green City Action

Abney Park Cemetery - Abney Park Cemetery Trust, English Nature Hackney Wildspace!

Al Hilal – Cheetham Al Hilal Community Project, Al Hilal Parent and Toddler group, Groundwork Manchester Salford and Trafford Trust

Calthorpe Project – Kitchen Ritual, Raised Voices, Bengali Music group, Raices Latinas, Coriander Club, Walter Segal Trust, Architype

Cashel Forest – BTCV Glasgow, Scottish Refugee Council, Trees for Life, Millennium Forests for Scotland, Border Consultants, Royal Scottish Forest Society, Mary Bates, Jack Harper, The Big Issue

Chelsea Physic Garden – Society of Apothecaries, Al Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre, Aylesbury Turkish Women's Project, Walworth Triangle Forum, Southwark

Chinese Hillside – Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Chumleigh Multicultural Gardens – Southwark Borough Council Park Ranger Service, Southwark MIND, Southwark Asian Elders group

Clovelly Centre – Plincke Landscape Ltd, Southampton Environment Centre, Shannon Project, Hampshire Gardens Trust, Hillier Gardens and Arboretum

Concrete to Coriander – Small Heath Park Community Garden, CSV Environment

Confused Space – Balsall Heath Forum Environment Team

Discover Story Garden – Discover

George's Park – Groundwork Birmingham, Young Friends of George's Park, Lozells Women's Group

Hidden Garden – Tramway Theatre, City Design Co-operative, Nva Organisation, Glasgow City Council

Kafel Centre – Swansea's Muslim community, Minority Ethnic Women's Network

Khalsa Wood – Bestwood Country Park, Nottingham Sikh community and the Ladies Group

London Wetland Centre – Southwark Young Carers

Lower Spen Local Nature Reserve – English Nature Wild space! Ponds for People, Adam Strickson, Salfia Islamic Community Centre, Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing community wardens

Mile End Park – The Environment Trust

Minet Country Park – A Rocha, Living Waterways project, Southall and Hayes Action to Renew the Environment, Southall Sustainability Forum

Moat and Tower - Sue Fenoughty, Moat House Residents Association

Mughal Garden – Bradford City Council, Friends of Lister Park, Bradford Community Environmental Project, Growing for Health, Bradford City Primary Care Trust, Walking for Health, Hawarun Hussain, Naweed Hussain

Pumpkins for the People - Peter Chin Kean Choy, Royal Horticultural Society Garden Magazine

Reading International Solidarity Centre – World Education Berkshire, Jessica Witchell, Permaculture Magazine

River Lea – Lea Rivers Trust, Lea Rowing Club and Leaside Canoeing, Education Trust, London Waterways Partnership, Lucille Price, Yaffa Geffen, Sophie Bernstein, Maria Amidu, Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls' School Stamford Hill

Roots and Shoots – Roots and Shoots, London Beekeepers Association

Rosehill Quarry Community Park - Rosehill Quarry Group, Rehenna Begum, Bangladeshi Welfare Association, Swansea Muslim Youth League, Darwatul Islam, SCVS, Swansea Environment Centre

Ryton Organic Gardens – Henry Doubleday Research Association and their Organic Food for All Project

St Agnes Park – St Agnes Park Association, Bristol City Council Parks Department, IRIS

Surrey Docks Farm – Federation of City Farms and Community Garden

Three Sisters – Good Road Community Garden, Home Composting Project, the International Native American Indian Association, Lenni Lenape Resource Centre UK

TWIGS - Richmond Fellowship, Thrive

Viewfinder – Claire Rishbeth, University of Sheffield

Contribution to focus groups and workshops

Al Hilal Project
Sandra Wong

Balsall Heath Forum
Balsall Heath Forum – Environmental Task Force: Tayear Mahmood, Manager; Asif Iqbal, Christian Markman, Dean Sharrard, David Osborne, Sarah Gayle, Muzammel Hussain, Ahmed Mussen, Nowrah Abdhul, Lawrence Moss.

Concrete To Coriander
Irena Iwegbu, CSV and the Bangladeshi Women's Garden group: Mrs S. Akhtar, Mrs S. Chowdhury, Mrs T. Khassum, Mrs M. Rhano, Mrs L. Saleha Chowdhury, S.K. Choudhury, A. Chowdhury

Cottingley Springs Gypsy Site
Residents and staff

Intercultural Gardens
Dr Christa Muller

Liverpool BEM Network Conference
Tracey Hylton, BEM Network
Kuumba Imani MillenniumCentre

Moss Side, Manchester
Liz Drysdale, Barnhill Childcare Centre; Mai Young, Wai Yin Women's Chinese Society ; Daniel Yupet, Tree Aid New Sudan; Shaun Braitwaite, Afro-Caribbean Community Environmental Activist; Ruhel Ahmed, Akeel Quershi, Robina Shar, Sundus Slam, Colin Floyed, Anita Lawsin, Delaina Lawson.

Nottingham Sikh Ladies Group
Harbant Kaur Sehra

Pepys Community Forum
Johnny, Shirley, Nico, Valja, Teresa, Mohamed

BEN

Working for full ethnic participation in the built and natural environment

Our Vision
To have representation and participation, at all levels, of ethnic communities in the built and natural environment, which reflects the profile of the ethnic population in Britain

Organisational Aims
To represent issues and concerns relating to ethnic participation in the built and natural environment

To address current issues and concerns relating to ethnic participation in the built and natural environment

To develop training and consultancy services in order to underpin ethnic participation

To develop, strengthen and maintain the BEN Network

To secure resources in order to maintain and increase operations across the UK

We use the word 'Black' symbolically, recognising that Black communities are the most visible of all ethnic communities. We work with Black, white and other ethnic communities.