

Kaleidoscope: Improving support for black, Asian and ethnic communities to access services from the natural environment and heritage sectors

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Foreword

Natural England commissions a range of reports from external contractors to provide evidence and advice to assist us in delivering our duties.

In 2012 Natural England commissioned the Black Environment Network (BEN) to investigate how to establish a more sustainable way of supporting the engagement of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME) and other communities under-represented in accessing the natural and heritage environment. This work will be used as the basis to develop a partnership project to deliver this objective and therefore advance policy and practice in Natural England's Outdoors for All programme. The report reflects both new research by BEN and previously collected information.

Currently people from low socio-economic groups, particularly those living in urban deprived areas, together with BAME are significantly less engaged in the natural environment than the rest of the adult population in England (Burt *et al*, 2013). People from BAME communities visit the natural environment 60% less than the rest of the adult English population, people living in urban deprived 40% less and people from socio-economic groups D and E more than 20% less. People's disconnection with the natural environment has significant implications for their:

- health, (Marmot, M. (2010) *Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post 2010*);
- social inclusion; and
- educational attainment.

Impacts that are disproportionally affecting those people from BAME communities and deprived urban areas.

The Government's Natural Environment White Paper (2011) aims to strengthen connections between people and nature. However, it acknowledges that the opportunities to benefit from spending time in the natural environment are currently not open to everyone, which can contribute to health and other inequalities. So the Government's ambition, set out in the White Paper, is that 'everyone should have fair access to a good quality natural environment'.

Natural England is committed to increasing the number and range of people who can experience and benefit from the natural environment and is championing Outdoors for All on behalf of Government and the natural environment, greenspace, volunteering and heritage sectors by working with partners to help improve the quality of everyone's experience of natural places and to increase the number and diversity of people inspired by, and enjoying, the natural environment.

Through the Outdoors for All programme Natural England is working closely with a range of partners to help deliver projects which seek to ensure that people living in deprived areas, the elderly, those with physical disabilities, mental health illness, learning difficulties and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities all have opportunities to access high quality natural environments

As part of the Outdoors for All programme, Natural England is keen to better understand the issues and priorities to help improve engagement in the natural environment amongst BAME and other urban deprived communities. This report should improve our understanding of the effectiveness of current practice and the challenges of scaling up delivery.

This report should be cited as:

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Further information

This report can be downloaded from the Natural England website: www.naturalengland.org.uk. For information on Natural England publications contact the Natural England Enquiry Service on 0845 600 3078 or e-mail enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk.

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KALEIDOSCOPE

IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES TO ACCESS SERVICES FROM THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE SECTORS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE SITUATION

Currently people from low socio-economic groups, particularly those living in urban deprived areas, together with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME) are significantly less engaged in the natural environment than the rest of the adult population in England (Burt et al., 2013). People from BAME communities visit the natural environment 60% less than the rest of the adult English population, people living in urban deprived 40% less and people from socio-economic groups D and E more than 20% less. The benefits derived from people's engagement with the natural environment are set out in the Marmot Review, which assessed the positive impact that nature has on people's mental and physical health, which concluded "High-quality natural environments foster healthy neighbourhoods; green spaces encourage social activity and reduce crime. The natural environment can help children's learning, whilst low engagement is likely to lead to impacts such as lower involvement in wider issues of sustainability." (Marmot, M. (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post 2010).

People's disconnection with the natural environment has significant implications for their health, social inclusion and educational attainment, impacts that are disproportionately affecting those people from BAME communities and deprived urban areas. BAME communities make up 13% (5.4m) of the English population, (Burt et al., 2013), and are a significant proportion of the population in a number of larger English Cities (ONS Census 2011). Their disconnection from the natural environment is therefore no longer a marginal issue in contemporary English society but a strategic challenge that needs to be urgently addressed through targeted interventions that deliver support to those of greatest need in a way that works with and through their local communities. An effective intervention with minority communities, especially BAME, could therefore provide a unique opportunity to deliver many social, economic and environmental policy agendas and address health inequalities and economic growth.

THE PROBLEM

There exist a number of barriers to engaging with the natural environment for BAME communities and other people living in urban deprived areas, including:

Environment and heritage sector organisations

- Start with their own priorities rather than the local communities.
- Host their own networks driven by their priorities.
- Lack knowledge and experience of working with BAME communities and people in deprived urban communities.
- Lack targeted and cost effective mechanisms to deliver sustained support at a scale that makes a positive impact in these communities.

Social and community sector organisations

- Lack environmental knowledge.
- Often host their own networks, but these are driven by their priorities rather than those of the communities.
- Some lack cost effective delivery mechanisms to support these communities.

BAME and urban deprived communities

- Lack knowledge of the environment and heritage sectors.
- Local champions lack environmental and heritage knowledge *and/or* are isolated and unsupported within the sector's current provision.

- Don't recognise their relationship with environment and heritage within their cultural or local context.
- Lack engagement beyond individual organisation's remit / agendas.

OPPORTUNITY

Over the last few years, a number of 'champions' for the natural environment and heritage have been recruited and trained from within BAME and urban deprived communities. In addition people from within environmental and heritage organisations have been better trained and prepared to work with these communities. These champions provide a significant opportunity for affecting attitudes and behaviours within their communities to the natural environment and therefore are a key component in helping to deliver more sustainable local communities however, they are often working in isolation and lack the local support needed to develop this role. By bringing these champions together and making better use of their skills and knowledge provides a focal point for:

1. Better support being given to champions to learn from each other and deliver sustainability within their communities.
2. The community to find support, explore opportunities, and engage with the sector, so broadening the existing network to support new but complementary audiences.
3. Achieving, delivering and shaping governmental and sectoral priorities.

This will provide a more complete and robust national coverage targeting those communities with the greatest need, delivered in ways that builds capacity in local communities to sustain the long term provision of services, and would provide a unique opportunity to help achieve many of Government's social, economic and environmental outcomes including:

- Localism,
- Active citizenship e.g. Volunteering
- Health & wellbeing
- Crime reduction and Community Safety
- Urban regeneration
- Social cohesion

DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF THE NETWORK SOLUTION

Consultation with partners and the experience of BEN and others recognised that any solution for support of community champions needs local staff trusted by the community, and with a degree of independence; a good understanding of the locality in which they are working; the ability to respond readily to opportunity and need, and a real grasp on the local issues, networks and opportunities. To achieve this a network of champions supported locally through 8 local/regional hubs with central support, to link them nationally, is the preferred option. Located in urban centres where the need is greatest and where champions and others already exist, the network would strengthen the existing structures by providing specific support to these vulnerable and excluded groups. It also allows community champions to integrate work across a number of thematic areas, and therefore be better able to fully and efficiently respond to the needs of their own communities. This will provide the delivery framework around which to build critical mass and thereby achieve sustainability.

PARTNERS

It is recommended that the development of the network is overseen by a cross-sectoral partnership with experience of minority engagement in the environment and heritage sectors. These are BEN (chair/lead body), Mind, Sensory Trust, Fieldfare Trust, Age UK; with other environment and heritage organisations acting as a wider reference group. Natural England and English Heritage as the sector's statutory agencies should also be partners to ensure local-national join up, alignment to government drivers and provide 'pathways' to shape organisational behaviour and influence government policy and decision-making. The individual roles of each of the partners will be defined.

RESOURCING THE PROJECT

- A 5-year grant is suggested to support the development of the network at the cost of £2.3m over 5 years.
- Year 3 - hubs begin to be funded through income earned, local support, in-kind contributions and 'investments'.

Sustainability

- Year 6 - Network fully funded from income generating activities, including; crowdfunding, charging for services, training, consultancy, individual and corporate funding.

WHAT WILL BE ACHIEVED AS A RESULT?

In summary the proposed Project would provide long term support for local champions from within minority communities and those that work with, and are known and trusted by them, to deliver increased engagement and effective involvement of under-represented communities within mainstream delivery. Specifically the Project would deliver:

- Improved inclusion and wellbeing as under-represented communities engage with the environment and heritage sectors, developing activities that are relevant to their needs, leading to improved environmental sustainability.
- Provide public and voluntary sector bodies with targeted outreach into under-represented communities.
- Increase the cost effectiveness and efficiency of existing networks and systems by providing clear "routes in" to under-represented communities, utilising the cross-sectoral knowledge of the community champions.
- Localism will be supported, allowing local issues to drive local agendas, whilst linking them to national bodies, policies or initiatives.
- Build approaches that work from and with the local community, (building on local activity and resilience) using known community champions and those motivated to drive change in their area (social entrepreneurs).

KALEIDOSCOPE

Improving support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to access services from the natural environment and heritage sectors.

THE SITUATION

Currently people from low socio-economic groups, particularly those living in urban deprived areas, together with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME) are significantly less engaged in the natural environment than the rest of the adult population in England (Burt et al., 2013). People from BAME communities visit the natural environment 60% less than the rest of the adult English population, people living in urban deprived 40% less and people from socio-economic groups D and E more than 20% less. The benefits derived from people's engagement with the natural environment are set out in the Marmot Review, which assessed the positive impact that nature has on people's mental and physical health, which concluded "High-quality natural environments foster healthy neighbourhoods; green spaces encourage social activity and reduce crime. The natural environment can help children's learning, whilst low engagement is likely to lead to impacts such as lower involvement in wider issues of sustainability." (Fair Society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review 2010).

People's disconnection with the natural environment has significant implications for their health, social inclusion and educational attainment, impacts that are disproportionately affecting those people from BAME communities and deprived urban areas. BAME communities make up 13% (5.4m) of the English population, and now represent the majority of the population (i.e. more than 50%) in a number of large English cities. Their disconnection from the natural environment is therefore no longer a marginal issue in contemporary English society, but a strategic challenge that needs to be urgently addressed through targeted interventions that deliver support to those of greatest need in a way that works with and through their local communities.

The need is supported by the current context for BAME and other minority communities and is particularly pertinent in deprived urban areas. The **Natural Environment White Paper - The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature 2011** states: Not everyone has an equal opportunity to access the benefits of a healthy natural environment. While some aspects of environmental quality have improved, it can vary between different areas and communities. People in disadvantaged areas across England experience greater exposure to air pollution, flooding, and often live in close proximity to large industrial and waste management sites or rivers with poor water quality. Statistics on Environmental Quality published in 2010 show that the more deprived an area is, the more exposed its residents are to unfavourable environmental conditions. Around 0.2% of people living in the least deprived areas may experience four or more environmental conditions that are 'least favourable'. This rises to around 17% for those people living in the most deprived areas in England.

Recent analysis of the MENE survey data on behalf of Natural England indicates significantly lower engagement by deprived urban minority communities in environmental and heritage issues and lower use of opportunities these offer than for the rest of the population (Burt et al., 2013). In 2009 Natural England, Defra and the Forestry Commission commissioned TNS to undertake the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE). MENE provides the most comprehensive dataset yet available on people's use and enjoyment of the natural environment. It includes comprehensive information on visits to the natural environment as well as other ways of enjoying

the natural environment such as gardening, watching wildlife and volunteering. The growing database provides insight into trends in visit taking over time and allows analysis for smaller geographic areas and population groups.

THE PROBLEM

There exist a number of barriers to engaging with the natural environment for BAME communities and other people living in urban deprived areas, including:

Environment and heritage sector organisations

- Start with their own priorities rather than the local communities
- Host their own networks driven by their priorities
- Lack knowledge and experience of working with BAME and other deprived urban communities
- Lack targeted and cost effective mechanisms to deliver sustained support at a scale that makes a positive impact in these communities

Social and community sector organisations

- Lack environmental knowledge
- Often host their own networks, but these are driven by their priorities rather than those of the communities
- Some lack cost effective delivery mechanisms to support these communities

BAME and urban deprived communities

- Lack knowledge of the environment and heritage sectors
- Local champions lack environmental and heritage knowledge *and/or* are isolated and unsupported within the sector's current provision
- Don't recognise their relationship with environment and heritage within a cultural or local context, and its relevance to them
- Lack engagement beyond individual organisation's remit / agendas.

Networks and support is not joined up

- Links and networks for minorities are weak both locally and nationally
- The networks and support service provision does not join up (community development and environmental heritage sectors operate separately to one another at local and national delivery levels; health sector does not utilise environment effectively etc)

The feedback from stakeholders (see Appendix 1) shows that whilst policies and other drivers exist to support equality for all in the delivery of environmental and heritage outreach programmes, the mechanisms for engagement and delivery are weak and poorly targeted and so the impact and outcomes of these programmes are generally ineffective, fragmented and short term. Delivery organisations in these sectors still do not have the required structures and systems, nor the relevant engagement practices embedded in organisational behaviours to deliver sustained support to these target communities.

THE OPPORTUNITY

POLICY CONTEXT

At the launch of Big Society in July 2010, the Prime Minister, David Cameron said:

'The Big Society is about a huge culture change where people, in their everyday lives, in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, in their workplace don't always turn to officials, local authorities or central government for answers to the problems they face but instead feel both free and powerful enough to help themselves and their own communities. It's about liberation – the biggest, most dramatic redistribution of power from elites in Whitehall to the man and woman on the street.'

The value of environmental and heritage assets to society are also supported by many other Government policy drivers, including:

- social inclusion
- health and wellbeing of communities
- community resilience and emergency response
- social cohesion
- educational value (formal and informal)
- environmental sustainability and issues of fuel poverty
- economic value (realisation of the value of environmental assets for societal wellbeing)

The need for increased ethnic and minority engagement in these areas is particularly important in the context of:

Creating the Conditions for Integration – Department for Communities and Local Government Policy Paper 2012, states two critical elements of engagement for people to find their own solutions and realise opportunities.

- *Social mobility - People able to realise their potential to get on in life*
- *Participation and Empowerment - People of **all backgrounds** have the opportunities to take part, be heard and take decisions in national and local life*

The paper also states:

'We will strongly support people to play an active part in society and improve their local communities. Encouraging communities to come together to do practical, everyday things will bridge divisions. We will create the conditions for transparency and accountability to ensure that people can trust public bodies'.

Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our Strategy for Public Health in England – Department of Health June 2012 states:

'Access to green spaces is associated with better mental and physical health across socio-economic groups. DCLG is working with Defra to create a new designation to protect green spaces of particular importance to local communities and providing practical guidance to support community groups in the ownership of public spaces. It is intended that, through this new designation, people will have improved access to land, enabling them to grow their own food'.

ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES FROM WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE SECTORS

National Heritage Protection Plan —English Heritage December 2012

states *'Heritage assets are valued for their contributions to local distinctiveness and character...Translating this local pride into better protection empowers local communities to manage their heritage. Actions will focus on developing practical and feasible means to assist local people, organisations and authorities in developing appropriate registration of such assets'*.

The Access and Engagement Strategy for England - Natural England, March 2012 states:

"engagement needs to be an integral part of all environmental delivery (ours and other bodies) now and for the foreseeable future. To think that engagement can be achieved through one-off, time limited, projects and programmes designed for that purpose, is to miss the point. Time-limited engagement projects will be only worth undertaking if they are designed to test or demonstrate effective ways of working, with the clear intention of following through on these for the long term...."

The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs June 2011 identifies many elements of relevance; in particular it states, *"We will mainstream the value of nature across our society by: strengthening the connections between people and nature to the benefit of both..."*.

Ethnic minority communities make up 13% (MENE) of the total population. However in urban centres these numbers are significantly higher, with figures showing that in cities such as Birmingham and Leicester those classed as ethnic minorities make up over 50% of the population, which means we are no longer not engaging a minority. This group comprises many of those for whom the wellbeing benefits can be most significant, often having lower incomes with poor access to basic amenities and resources (e.g. fuel poverty) and consequent poorer health.

An effective intervention with minority communities, especially BAME, could therefore provide a unique opportunity to deliver many social, economic and environmental policy agendas.

These agendas include:

- Big Society
- Health
- Heritage conservation
- Sustainable development
- Energy saving
- Nature deficit disorder
- Wellbeing
- Social capital
- Ethnic minority community inclusion
- Faith and social cohesion
- Crime and community safety
- Encouraging the valuing of Ecosystem Services

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Our consultation (see Appendix 1) led to an analysis of the current organisational context and relationships. This is important in understanding the reason behind the problems and the blockages that need to be addressed to effect change. This is summarised in table 1;

Table 1 Agendas and Roles of Critical Stakeholders

NATIONAL LEVEL			LOCAL AUTHORITY / DELIVERY LEVEL			LOCAL COMMUNITY LEVEL		
STAKEHOLDER	ISSUES	ROLE	STAKEHOLDER	ISSUES	ROLE	STAKEHOLDER	ISSUES	ROLE
Ministries / Departments	Importance of issues recognised but solution not being delivered	Help set and fund agendas	Local Authority	Lack mechanism and / or resources to reach under-represented groups. Link between environment and social / economic issues not always clearly understood or delivered for	Service delivery	Religious Institutions	Need to be engaged in environmental and heritage agendas and encouraged to recognise the importance of these agendas to their congregations	Influence and cultural insights plus route to some sectors of the community
Corporates Large Businesses	Large BAME and other minority group owned firms as possible opportunity for funds. Also company CSR opportunities	Influence and finance	Police	Need to reach into under-represented groups, especially in deprived urban areas of high crime. Clear link between good environment and reduced crime	Service delivery	Small and medium sized enterprise	Under-utilised in current engagement of under-represented groups	Potential link to influential families
Non Departmental Public Bodies	Tend to focus on subject not engagement. Lack mechanisms to engage under-represented groups. Organisational and/or staff culture, understanding or lack skills either in working with under-represented groups & / or working on environment and heritage issues.	Influence and finance. Also have agendas to deliver	Education (Formal and informal)	Need to reach into under-represented groups, especially in deprived urban areas of educational attainment. Clear link between good environment and educational achievement	Service delivery	Local Groups (social or subject specific)	Need to be engaged in environmental and heritage agendas and encouraged to recognise the importance of these agendas to their members. Members also lack awareness and need to be empowered	Extremely valuable asset in engagement of under-represented groups

Funders	Lack knowledge, capacity and mechanism to overcome current situation Help set and fund agendas	Health	Need to reach into under-represented groups, especially in deprived urban areas of poor health. Clear link between good environment and health Service delivery	CVS / RCC	Organisational and /or staff culture, understanding or lack skills either in working with under-represented groups & / or working on environment and heritage issues.	Potentially important local link for community organisations (though variable in their current links to under-represented communities).
		Housing Associations	Need to better engage tenants in these agendas and recognise link to social agendas Service delivery	Community Champions	Lack a mechanism for wider support and peer to peer learning	Extremely valuable asset in engagement of under-represented groups
Voluntary Sector - Some or all have volunteer / local networks around specific themes or issues - primarily: Env / Heritage orgs; Social / CD orgs; sectoral groups	Organisational and /or staff culture, understanding or lack skills either in working with under-represented groups & / or working on environment and heritage issues. Reach into communities. Inform agendas	Local Delivery of Voluntary Sector bodies	As for national Reach into communities	BAME and other specific under-represented and / or minority groups	Need to be engaged in environmental and heritage agendas and encouraged to recognise the importance of these agendas to their members. Members also lack awareness and need to be empowered	Direct link to under-represented groups
		Politicians	Importance of local links and need to reach under-represented communities Reach into communities			

It is clear that a lot of organisations and support already exists so the need is to make it more cohesive and effective.

We know from our consultations with stakeholders that:

- Past interventions, involving the development of locally driven, bottom up social entrepreneurs, have led to the development of many social and environmental champions within minority communities. However, they remain isolated and unsupported once projects or interventions end and funding ceases (BEN, 2010).
- If these existing champions could be better supported for the long term, they could support local sustainable change, and
- Local champions provide an access point for national/regional organisations wanting to support to these deprived communities.

So, a successful intervention needs to:

- Provide a strong support mechanism to better enable environment and heritage organisations to work with under-represented communities.
- Help to improve and embed new delivery practices within environmental and heritage organisations to work with under-represented communities.
- Help to build awareness within community organisations of relevant environmental and heritage services

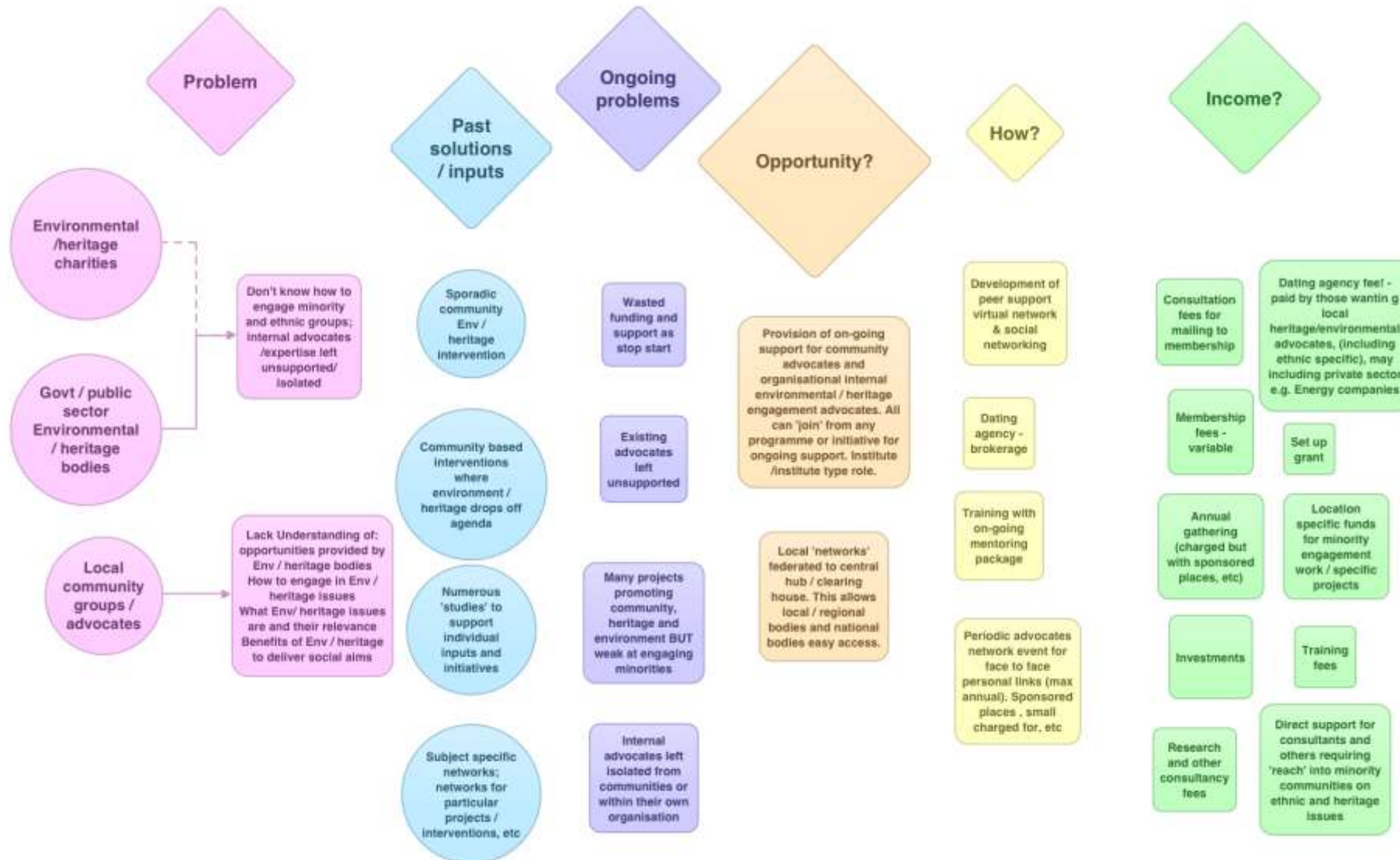
DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF NETWORK SOLUTION

It is proposed that we establish a national network of local champions that would help build greater capacity in local communities and thereby enable better support for delivering policies and achieving project outcomes.

The principles for designing the network are:

- Capacity building, prioritised and targeted at communities evidenced to have the greatest need.
- Building the quality of the outreach service built on existing local networks.
- Extending the existing outreach service.
- Developing a more coherent and integrated outreach service.
- Local support, for local people by local people.
- Delivering long term support through a financially sustainable business model.

Diagram 1. Visualising the Kaleidoscope delivery structure



The network would operate at a national, regional, local authority and local community level. It would initiate these activities around 8 urban hubs with a national support hub. Whilst not exclusive to any particular population, the concentration of BAME and minority groups is particularly high in deprived urban wards (Burt et al 2013). In addition, these populations are large enough that they often have community based groups based around ethnicity. Diagram 1 summarises the logic for an intervention strategy working from the deprived urban BAME population out to deprived rural minorities.

Proposed network structure

A small national centre would work with a small group of partners, who have a practical knowledge and experience of under-represented audience engagement in heritage and environmental sectors, to:

- Support national workshops amongst leading network and delivery bodies.
- Provide a central access point for national bodies to engage the services of the network and 'reach into' local minority communities.
- Lead on organisational change through internal advocate support and training programmes.

The network would be co-ordinated by

- BEN – Ethnic inclusion in environment and heritage and lead body

With direct support and guidance from:

- Natural England

BEN would also draw on its wider network, bringing in specialist knowledge where required, including organisations like:

- MIND – Mental health specialist lead
- Age UK –Elderly specialist
- Fieldfare Trust - Disability
- Sensory Trust - Disability

BEN would also seek to work through any and all existing network bodies via Regional hubs.

Regional hubs would be established in eight urban areas. To ensure development is as effective and efficient as possible and adds real value and establishes a critical mass of engagement quickly, the choice of these hubs would be based on a number of factors including:

- Number of residents from under-represented groups, particularly BAME.
- Number of known and trained existing community champions.
- Effective geographic coverage.
- Existing presence / experience of the potential delivery partners (enabling intervention to develop more quickly).

Each hub would have a network development officer whose role would be to develop, with partners, an action plan to guide interventions which improve local integration, build local hub capacity, strengthen networks and identify local peer leaders for engagement of under-represented groups. Once this is established in an area the network champion would move to a new area. These plans would be overseen by local partnerships (existing or new depending on the area and what currently exists).

The local networks, developed and/ or strengthened by the network development officer will then provide locally available support to local community champions who will in turn remain the lead focus for community action.

WHAT WILL BE ACHIEVED AS A RESULT?

The outcomes for the network are to:

- Build the awareness of under-represented groups on what is available to them in terms of environmental and heritage opportunities through local champions.
- Through raised awareness provide a more inclusive enabling environment for under-represented groups to enjoy the environment and heritage and to engage in the related debates.
- Build greater resilience and wellbeing in local communities through increased awareness and engagement.
- Build the coverage and quality of the existing local champion network by providing support to local champions to learn from each other, receive mentor advice and provide a peer-to-peer sharing and learning environment.
- Build capacity and understanding in local and national organisations, agencies and Government Departments enabling them to improve how they work with under-represented groups.
- Provide a forum for information sharing between policy makers, practitioners and the local communities.
- Develop understanding of different perspectives on environment and heritage and develop an inclusive approach to their future management.
- Give a voice to local community champions from within minority communities.

EVALUATING THE PROJECT

It is anticipated that the evaluation and policy lessons flowing out of this project will be significant and so one of the partners will take a lead in this area. It is also our intention that the findings be published after the main project-funding period has ended, as well as some interim learning reports. To allow for this important element a realistic budget has therefore been allowed for. It is anticipated that the monitoring and evaluation will include regular output and outcome both quantitative and qualitative.

APPENDICES

1. CONSULTATION FOR THIS STUDY

RESEARCH APPROACH

Step 1

An initial **survey of Ethnic Minority Community Environmental Champions** was completed by BEN in the winter of 2011. This used a simple questionnaire based approach with 72 Community Champions. This work identified a need for greater support for Community Champions.

Step 2

Wider survey into the value and role of a minority community champions network for the environment and heritage was then completed at the end of 2012 / early 2013.

The methods chosen were based on our past experience of what methods work best to get responses and the need for the survey to really probe the issues, rather than just gain a general overview of views.

Methods used included:

- Key informant interviews with key national organisations from environmental, heritage, community development sectors as well as organisations supporting local networking.
- Survey Monkey questionnaire for individuals.
- Survey Monkey questionnaire for relevant organisations.
- A small number of meetings/ conversations with key individuals known to have specific relevant knowledge and experience.

This survey was based upon a stakeholder analysis (Summary spreadsheet provided in the appendices) of the main providers across the relevant sectors resulting in the following:

- 109 organisations invited to complete on-line questionnaire (33 respondents).
- 72 individuals were invited to complete the on-line survey (unfortunately only 2 respondents – though many of them had already responded as part of BEN's original survey). This was in addition to the previous survey carried out in 2011 for which the results are summarised above and perhaps partly explains the low response rate. Though some further informal conversations have been held with BEN Community Champions. These provided no further insights than the 2011 survey.
- 6 organisations interviewed over the phone.
- 9 organisations representatives met face to face.
- 9 plus individuals met / interviewed with known knowledge.

A complete list of respondents is included in the Appendix 2.

Ethnic Minority Community Environmental Champions survey

A survey of BEN 72 Community Champions in 2011 found that:

- BEN trained Community Champions (CEA's) are using what they learned, but would like to take that learning further.
- The BEN training highlighted new opportunities, and has given CEA's a keen awareness of how it applies to the issues they are addressing as communities. However, the response recognised that this was the start of a process and for it to be sustainable it needed to be built on, something that in a variety of ways the CEA's were keen to do.
- For newcomers, the provision of mentoring, advice and support would fuel their development.
- For everyone, regular information about the opportunities for participation and training offered by the environmental sector would be very welcome as a shortcut for groups whose main aims are not environmental, as they cannot dedicate the time to keep in touch with everything.
- There is a need to underpin this on-going engagement with some form of external stimulus and support. This would be primarily to provide a structure in which CEA's can be kept informed of further opportunities to extend their work, so that the development of activities and projects would be a natural outcome.
- A regular update on new developments within the environmental sector as they happen would be useful.
- While funding was recognised as important, so was access to good practice, training and knowledge of new working themes and initiatives being launched.
- Above all, face-to-face contact was seen as most important, as this gave them the strongest context to explore ideas together, and build relationships that would be on-going.
- CEA's wished to spread the skills and knowledge they have gained. They have begun to do this as situations arise, but feel the opportunity to work in tandem with BEN was still important at this stage. This was not only as a support while their own confidence develops, but also feeling there was a "safety net" to deal adequately with any challenges.

Wider survey into the value and role of a minority community champions network for the environment and heritage

The following summarises the main findings from the on-line questionnaires and key informant interviews. The comments are presented generically since some of the issues discussed are sensitive and made in confidence. It is not felt to be appropriate to indicate their source. The majority of significant issues, opportunities and concerns were raised from a number of respondents and appropriately triangulated across the respondent types.

Survey monkey

A total of 109 organisations invited to complete on-line questionnaire which gave 33 respondents. In addition 72 individuals were invited to complete the on-line survey, though unfortunately there were only 2 respondents (though many of them had already responded as part of BEN's original survey). This was in addition to the previous survey carried out in 2011 for which the results are summarised above and perhaps partly explains the low response rate. Though some further informal conversations have been held with BEN Community Champions. These provided no further insights than the 2011 survey.

22 work with Champions at community level, with another 6 saying they would use them if they were available through another body.

For those with Community Champions, the focus of the community champions work tends to be geographically focused and driven by the organisations interest to which the champions 'sign up' or in a few cases driven by the local issues (through a community development approach and in which the organisation supports the Community Champion.

Subjects tend to use the environment for social benefit or work directly for the environment itself. Examples include:

- Community development
- Historic buildings
- Food & community gardening
- Care farming & Health and environment relationship
- Health culture and environment, including spiritual & mental health
- Youth and family
- Specific aspects of land / environmental intervention
- Multi-cultural activities
- Encouraging the enjoyment of natural world including national parks, community forest, etc.

25 respondents said a collaborative approach to support was a good idea (rest did not respond).

In response to the value Community Champions could have to the delivery of their organisation's work 19 said yes, 1 no and 7 maybe.

It was generally felt that a wider focus than just BAME would be appropriate for a network, though some of these felt BAME should be the starting point. In general:

- 6 favoured BAME focus only
- 10 were unsure / no answer
- 16 felt the focus should be wider but remain for deprived and / or under-represented groups

The scope of the advocates should be fairly broad and based around a local community support role providing training, facilitation and support. Some organisations are looking for specific subject awareness-raising but most take a broad view of the Champions role in heritage and environment.

How the focus should be applied in terms of what aspects of environment; whether it should be rural / urban; subject focused or broad - gained a lot of debate and it is fair to say there

was no complete clarity. In broad terms comments favoured a broad, holistic inclusion of heritage and environment, whilst probably starting with a greater focus on a particular area of which natural environment seemed to fit best with respondee agendas.

The following table summarises the services respondents felt a network could usefully provide.

Please could you help us understand the services you think you would use from a 'network'?

	Total answered	Yes	No	Not Sure/Don't Know
Training for staff / organisations in minority group engagement	21	13	2	6
Training for advocates / community groups in environmental and heritage opportunities	21	14	1	6
Regional Networking and 'experience sharing events' with community advocates/champions	21	17	0	4
Regional Networking and 'experience sharing events' with other environmental/ heritage organisations	22	13	1	8
Regional Networking and 'experience sharing events' jointly	22	13	0	9
Annual national gathering and learning / sharing / network events across all groups	22	14	1	7
Use of 'dating' service – putting you in touch with appropriate contacts, links, opportunities.	20	14	1	5
Experts on-line support (on-line question and answer services for advice and information). Support for internal organisational behavioural change	23	11	4	8
Commissioning work through the network to support specific projects	23	14	3	6
Membership for Local Organisations	21	7	3	11
Membership for National Organisations / Statutory Agencies	21	9	3	9

Please could you help us understand what you would be willing / able / likely to pay annually.

	Total answered	£10	£30	£50	£100	£200
Training for staff / organisations in minority group engagement	11	1	2	2	5	1
Training for advocates / community groups in environmental and heritage opportunities	9	1	3	0	3	2
Regional Networking and 'experience sharing events' with community advocates/champions	10	3	4	2	0	1
Regional Networking and 'experience sharing events' with other environmental/ heritage organisations	7	1	4	1	1	0
Regional Networking and 'experience sharing events' jointly	7	1	2	4	0	0
Annual national gathering and learning / sharing / network events across all groups	7	1	4	1	1	0
Use of 'dating' service – putting you in touch with appropriate contacts, links, opportunities.	9	4	1	0	1	3
Experts on-line support (on-line question and answer services for advice and information). Support for internal organisational behavioural change	5	2	1	2	0	0
Commissioning work through the network to support specific projects	8	2	1	1	1	3
Membership for Local Organisations	4	2	2	0	0	0
Membership for National Organisations / Statutory Agencies	7	2	2	2	0	1

Benefits to the community champions were generally seen as down to the wider learning, links and benefits a network can provide, along with their ability to get information from other sources and link with Champions with other interests.

Relationship with existing networks was seen as being:

- Generally being mutually beneficial, however there is also a concern that large organisations will not want to really engage until the network is large enough and strong enough for them to feel they are missing out if they are not part of it. Whilst the potential for synergy and cost reduction, effectiveness and efficiency is recognised, there is still concern therefore around individual organisations protecting their patch / contacts until membership of the network is seen as being of greater value. This is referred to by one respondent as being somewhat 'chicken and egg'.

In terms of what the responding organisations offer to the network:

- Those with appropriate engagement knowledge offer their specialist knowledge.

- Engagement support and outreach through their own networks, hosting events and other activities.
- Many are unsure.

In terms of what they would want / hope to gain from a network:

- Training.
- Networks, contacts and local community level delivery support / links.
- A route to offer their services and advice.
- Improved internal capacity and support to their own networks and champions.
- More active participation and reach into under-represented groups.
- Learning and sharing.
- Access to future partners and opportunities, including funding.

In terms of the general running and development of the network, plus BEN's role the overview can be summarised as being:

- The majority of those with a view felt that BEN has a key role to play in developing this network and facilitating the process.
- The general feeling is that the network should work with a wider consortium of partners to bring together existing networks, link them and work through them.
- Those with specific knowledge on engagement of BAME and under-represented groups (including BEN) would also play a guidance and capacity building role.

Interviews

The main issues identified in the interviews are summarised as:

- There is a consensus that the engagement of minorities in environment and heritage is still weak.
- There is a belief in engagement of these groups but the link between them and organisational priorities is sometimes weak or has not been identified / is not understood, so it is not a priority.
- Community / social sector and the environmental sector still have communication gaps based on a lack of understanding of one another. This significantly limits lesson learning and skill transfer.
- A lot of the knowledge and delivery support exists but it is not joined up with communication and awareness so does not get used.
- Environment and heritage is taken from an external perspective rather than understanding and building on the minority group's own relationship with environment.
- Despite many institutions employing minorities, they operate in the existing structures and frameworks and there is little room / role / opportunity to bring in their knowledge of their own minority group to the organisational strategy (perhaps because many of them are in more junior roles?).
- There are many environmental and heritage issues which are likely to impact most significantly on minority groups, particularly the impacts of climate change and fuel poverty (as well as the deteriorating financial situation reducing support).
- Minority communities are unaware of what is available or lack the opportunities and relationship with the natural environment and heritage so are not taking opportunities that are available to them.
- The economic environment for funding is reducing and the need for partnership, complimentary working, etc. is increasing.

2. CONSULTATION RESPONDENTS

The following organisations responded to the on-line questionnaire
(Not all responding organisations gave their name)

Bradford Community Environment Project
Calthorpe Project
Campaign for National Parks
Care Farming UK
Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World
Community Composting Network
Community Environment Associates
East Staffordshire Borough Council
Environment Agency
Environmental Law Foundation
Farming and Countryside Education
Federation of City Farms and Community Garden
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
Forest of Avon Trust
Garden Organic
Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire
Groundwork North East
Hindu Samaj, Sheffield and District
Mind
National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Natural England
Permaculture Association
Ramblers
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
The Mersey Forest
The National Forest Company
The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
Whirlow Hall Farm Trust
Women's Environmental Network (WEN)

The following organisations were interviewed by phone

- Countryside Council for Wales
- Defra
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Friends of the Earth
- National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The following organisations we met face to face

- Big Local
- Council For National Parks
- English Heritage

- Environmental Law Foundation
- Heritage Lottery (informal conversation)
- Local Works
- National Council of Voluntary Organisations
- The Conservation Volunteers
- Tree Council

Plus attendance and presentation at **Outdoors for All** working group meeting

Individual Key informants

- Field worker for Locality
- Previous Every Action Counts co-ordinator
- BEN staff member involved in community growing project
- Tom Flood, Previous CEO for The Conservation Volunteers
- Forestry Commission social engagement staff member
- Cabinet Office representative (led on establishment of Community Organiser programme)
- A number of consultants who have worked with community networks and community representative programmes
- Independent fundraiser and manager of relevant national programmes: Walking for Health; Natural Assets Grant Fund; Access to Nature Fund; Doorstep Greens Grant.
- A number of people involved in field level support to Local Neighbourhood Planning
- A number of BEN's own staff

In addition, some research was made (through the interviews, web research and researcher won knowledge) of past initiatives including:

INITIATIVE NAME	Emphasis	Lead body
Every Action Counts	SD	CDF (Defra)
Natural Pioneers	Natural environment	TCV (BTCV)
Mosaic	Natural environment	CNP
Rainbow	Natural environment & heritage	BEN
Environments for All	Natural Environment	TCV (BTCV)
Living Landscapes	Natural Environment	RSWT
Sustainable Communities Programme	Advocacy	ELF
Power Up	Campaigning/Advocacy	FoE
Whose Story	Heritage	National Trust (WM)
Ecominds	Natural environment	Mind
EH Outreach Programme	Heritage	EH
Big Local	Environment	CDF (Big)

3. STAKEHOLDERS MAILED REGARDING THIS CONSULTATION

A Rocha Living Waterways
Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)
Age UK
Bankside Open Spaces Trust
Bat Conservation Trust
Butterfly Conservation
Campaign for Better Transport
Canal & River Trust
Capacity Global
Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World
Community Composting Network
Community Development Exchange
Community Development Foundation
Community Forests
Community Recycling Network (CRN)
Community Service Volunteers – Environment (CSV)
Council For British Archaeology (CBA)
Council for National Parks
Council to Protect of Rural England (CPRE)
Crime Concern
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC)
Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra)
Department of Health (DoH)
Disability Rights UK (Formerly Radar)
Energy Savings Trust
English Heritage
Environment Agency
Environmental Law Foundation (ELF)
Farming and Countryside Education (FACE)
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
Field Studies Council
Fieldfare Trust
Forest Enterprise
Forest of Avon
Forest of Mercia
Forestry Commission
Forum for the Future
Friends of the Earth (FoE)
Garden Organic
Global Action Plan (GAP)
Great Western Community Forest
Green Alliance
Green Light Trust
Greenpeace
Greenspace
Greenwood Community Forest

Groundwork
Groundwork North East
Heritage Alliance
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)
Heywoods
Historic Houses Association (HHA)
Historic Royal Palaces
Home Office
Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA)
Ipswich and Suffolk Bangladeshi Support Centre
Landlife
Learning through Landscapes
Living Streets
Local Government Association (LGA)
Locality
Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
Marston Vale Community Forest
Mersey Forest
Mind
National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
National Forest
National Parks (English National Parks Authorities Association)
National Trust
Natural England
National Council for Voluntary Organisation (NCVO)
Pennine Edge Forest
Permaculture Association
Plantlife
Ramblers Association
Red Rose Forest
Riding for the Disabled
Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)
Royal Institute of British Architecture (RIBA)
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT)
Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
Sensory Trust
Sheffield Black and Minority Ethnic Environment Network (SHEBEEN)
Soil Association
South Yorkshire Forest
Sustrans
The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
Thames Chase Forest
The Black Development Agency
The Runnymede Trust
Thrive
Tidy Britain Group
Transition Towns Network
Tree Council

Trees for Cities
Waste and Recycling Action Programme (WRAP)
Watling Chase
White Rose Forest
Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)
Women Connect First
Women's Environmental Network
Woodland Trust
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
Youth Hostels Association (YHA)

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