



Beyond the Boundary, Yorkshire

'Beyond the Boundary' was a three year Action Research Project commissioned as part of Defra's Diversity Review in 2004. It was run by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and Bradford Metropolitan Council. The project explored whether twinning urban and rural communities and their young people around a shared interest could lead to a sustainable increase in visits to the countryside by people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups.

Key activities

Young people, aged between nine and sixteen from Bradford and the Yorkshire Dales were invited to take part in cricket matches, an activity people could identify and participate in. They were encouraged to bring their families along, who had an opportunity to take part in different activities.

A total of 620 participants took part in 'Beyond the Boundary' which included 243 children. Out of the 620 participants, 472 took part in non-cricketing activities.

"We did caving, fishing, pony trekking, lots of good stuff in the countryside and it was a good experience for a lot of the kids from inner city Bradford."

Project participant

Key findings

There were changes in perceptions and expectations amongst some of the young Asian cricketers about how they would be received and whether they would be discriminated against in the countryside, which was perceived to be a predominantly white setting.

Participants began to see the Dales' communities as hospitable, e.g. hosting an Asian barbeque as a way of making a cultural connection with participants, their families and local residents.

“The Dales are open to everybody. I think it's a good idea that we can try and get people from out of the cities to come and have a look and see how beautiful it really is.”

Project participant

“It's amazing how similar people are, even though they are from different backgrounds.”

Project participant

'Beyond the Boundary' generated some positive experiences of other people's cultures and created an element of community cohesion.

“Today's been absolutely excellent. For children, it doesn't matter what race or ethnicity, and they don't look at anybody's colour of their skin. It's great that children can just play.”

Project participant

Conclusions

'Beyond the Boundary' demonstrated how members of the Asian community enjoy being in the countryside. The project broke down some social and cultural barriers between users of the countryside, local residents and service providers. Some clubs still continue to meet independently for cricket matches in Settle.

The project also had a positive effect on the organisations involved in making it happen.

“All organisations from Bradford involved in the project have noticed differences. They started as cricket clubs, but since the project, have taken more responsibilities on, looking at the more social aspects of how families can be involved.”

Taj Butt, Bradford City Council

More information

For details on this and all the Action Research Projects visit www.naturalengland.org.uk

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Defra continues its work to increase the number of people from under-represented groups who access the natural environment through its 'Outdoors for All' programme. For more information contact:

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Accessibility

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