



BEN

Black Environment Network



The BEN Rainbow Countryside Scheme

The countryside belongs to all of us. The Rainbow Countryside Scheme plans to provide a range of training programmes and taster visits to help ethnic community groups access the natural environment and independently plan educational group outings to locations across England.

On 5th September 2006, the Big Lottery Fund announced that BEN is one of seven organisations working across England moving one step closer to receiving a slice of £234 million from their Changing Spaces programme.

Changing Spaces was launched in November 2005 to help communities access and improve their local environments. The programme will fund a range of activities from local food schemes and farmers markets, to education projects teaching people about the environment.

Sir Clive Booth, Chair of the Big Lottery Fund, said: *“Changing Spaces will open up a whole world of opportunity for organisations with a real understanding of the environment. The scheme will pave the way for communities to share inspiring ideas and change the way they think about and use the spaces around them. The funding will see projects bring ideas and plans to life with schemes embracing community spaces, local community enterprise and access to the natural environment. Changing Spaces will see the creation and transformation of local spaces accessible to all.”*

To see the full list of successful Stage 1 applicants, go to www.biglotteryfund.org.uk



What is the Development Phase?

All the organisations successful in Stage 1 are given a 6-month development phase to work on the details of their plans. BEN has been given a Development Grant of £279,696. All of us will give details of our final plans, in the form of a Stage 2 application, to the Big Lottery Fund by February 2007.

Telling us what you want gets you what you need

Make your contribution to our success by:

Filling in the postcard to tell us you want to take part

Filling in the questionnaire to tell us what you want or need

When will the projects start?

The Stage 2 results will be announced by the end of July 2007. If we are successful, we will begin around November 2007. The BEN Rainbow Countryside Scheme proposed by BEN consists of a portfolio of projects worth around £16million over 5 years. BEN will work in the 9 regions across England.

Of course, we cannot work with everyone at once. We will begin by working with the areas around our 29 project office locations. During the 5 years, we will fan out and try to cover every area of the regions. We are therefore now consulting groups and organisations in these areas to inform our first 2 years' work plan, as required for the Stage 2 application.



What will the BEN Rainbow Countryside Scheme do?

The Rainbow Countryside Scheme plans to provide a range of training programmes and taster visits to help ethnic community groups access the natural environment and independently plan educational group outings to locations across the whole of England.

Why do we need such a project?

Research tells us that over 25 million people have little or no contact with the countryside. Many organisations are working with a range of social groups in different ways. Ethnic communities, many of them living in some of the most deprived areas, are part of this overall picture.

The DEFRA Diversity Review states:

- It is assumed that under-represented groups have no interest in the countryside. This is not the case
- All these groups are keen to enjoy the outdoors once they have tasted the experience.
- A lack of confidence and information is the biggest initial barrier.
- A lack of confidence among providers in approaching people from these groups results in a lack of engagement with potential visitors. Little attention is paid to communicating directly with these groups and positive images are scarce
- Longer term funding for this work is a major issue. Help is needed in targeting visitor groups

BEN will contribute through its unique expertise in working with ethnic communities. The portfolio of projects will benefit ethnic groups as well as release their vast missing contribution to the natural environment. We will work to address the 2 sides of the equation – building the capacity of ethnic groups and the capacity of provider organisations.

See the BEN Rainbow Countryside Scheme booklet for more details, or go to www.ben-network.org.uk and click on the Rainbow button on our Home Page.



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BEN is an organisation established to enable full ethnic participation in the built and natural environment

We look forward to working together

Do you want more copies of what we sent you?

Do you need more information?

www.ben-network.org.uk Click on the Rainbow button

Contact us:

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*BEN uses the word 'black' symbolically recognising that the black communities are the most visible of all ethnic communities.
We work with black white and other ethnic communities.*



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