

Date for the diary

Friday 8 August 2008 – for immediate release

Reaching Out

Tuesday 23 September 2008

Town Hall, Reading

Reaching Out, a conference organised by GreenSpace, is taking place on Tuesday 23 September at the town hall in Reading. The conference is in partnership with IPGS and Reading Borough Council, and supported by Glendale. The one-day event will focus on managing parks to encourage engagement with black and minority ethnic groups.

Paul Bramhill, Chief Executive of GreenSpace, said: "Parks have the potential to be at the centre of every community but, despite being free to use and a great place to relax or exercise, participation of black and minority ethnic groups is often limited. The challenge for park managers is to increase engagement with BME communities and ensure parks are welcoming and accessible in the long-term."

-Ends-

-Notes to Editors-

- For further information, or to arrange a press pass, please contact:

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To book a place at the conference, please contact:

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- GreenSpace is a registered charity which works to improve parks and green spaces by raising awareness, involving communities and creating skilled professionals. For more information please go to www.green-space.org.uk
- **Presentations will include:**

James Friel, Heritage Access Officer for England, Black Environment Network
James Friel will provide an overview of the factors preventing ethnically diverse groups from using parks and green spaces and discuss how BEN has been developing effective relationships between mainstream environmental organisations and BME communities.

Marie Brobyn & Jenny Crook, Natural England

Defra's Outdoors for All Diversity Action Plan, produced in partnership with Natural England, aims to increase the number of people from under-represented groups who access the natural environment. Marie Brobyn and Jenny Crook will discuss the background and context of the plan and provide examples of how it has been implemented in Natural England's work.

Nina Arwitz, Project Manager, the Mosaic Partnership

The Mosaic Partnership aims to build long-term and strategic engagement between ethnic minority communities and the National Parks. In this presentation Nina Arwitz will discuss the partnership's work, and how its principles can be adapted to engage BME communities in both urban and rural parks and green spaces.

Jan McHarry, Trustee, Faith-Based Regeneration Network

Jan McHarry will provide an overview of work being done to by multi-faith community groups to improve their local environments in ethnically diverse areas.

Maxwell Ayamba, Networking and Advocacy Officer, SHEBEEN

Shebeen works with BME young people in Sheffield to promote access to green spaces. Maxwell Ayamba will explore the challenges the organisation has faced and look at how to develop effective relationships with young people from diverse backgrounds in order to empower them to access green spaces independently.

Workshops and site tours will also be offered in the afternoon.