



Active Communities in the South East –

BTCV Fact Sheet 2010

Background:

The year 2009 marked our 50th anniversary. Practically and locally grounded, BTCV has built great authority on a UK wide scale by engaging and motivating people from the broadest range of backgrounds, abilities, cultures and needs, including the most deprived and neglected communities. A belief in environmental justice unites our activities – everyone's right to a decent environment and to participate in shaping and sustaining it.

BTCV is unique, a large scale national organisation that delivers a multitude of small scale localised projects. The combined social, environmental and economic impact of tens of thousands of local projects is huge. Financially, research shows that £1 invested in our work can yield a measurable social return on investment of around £4 – sometimes more.

Key Areas:

BTCV has four focused areas:

- *Investing in a better environment* which shapes opportunity and aspiration;
- ***Investing in environmentally active citizens, reconnecting them with the environment and encouraging pro-environmental behaviour;***
- ***Investing in improved health and wellbeing through practical environmental volunteering and engagement;***
- *Investing in employment skills for the future* through training and employment services.

Investing in environmentally active citizens

Outcome statement: *As a result of our support and encouragement, people will think and act differently and work collectively through practical action to understand and improve their environment.*

Actions:

We will empower individuals and communities to take ownership of their local environment.
We will inform and support a wide range of environmentally aware, active citizens.

Target: Actively support **1.5 million** people in environmental action

BTCV in the South East:

BTCV operates from 5 main offices covering the whole of the South East, these include:

- Singelton Environment Centre, Ashford
- Ninfield Environment Centre, near Bexhill
- Aylesbury, Reading and Southampton

BTCV Activities:

BTCV Community Group network: There are 407 community groups associated with BTCV in the South East. Membership offers access insurance, start up grants, discounts on BTCV tools, trees and training.

BTCV in the South East facilitates local communities in establishing self-sustaining groups. These groups run regular sessions of practical environmental activity to improve the health, wellbeing and personal development of the group's participants. BTCV Group Review ensures groups operate in a consistent, safe, and effective way, so that they are active into the future.

BTCV Green Gym: Our Green Gym® alternative to the traditional gym provides a natural workout in the outdoors. It presents people of all ages and abilities with an opportunity to get fit, de-stress and meet new friends, learn new skills and conserve nature. Its effects have already been proven by independent research.

BTCV Training: In partnership with Guildford, Chichester, and Plumpton Colleges, BTCV delivers NVQ Level 1 & 2 courses in Countryside management together with a range of short course training.

BTCV Wardening Schemes: BTCV provides knowledge, skills and confidence for individuals to undertake practical environmental action in areas of interest to themselves such as trees, beaches and ponds.

Health Walks: In partnerships with PCT's, BTCV is currently delivering activities in East Sussex & Kent.

Partnership Working:

Owning no land, BTCV welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with other voluntary sector organisations, Local Authorities, government agencies and the private sector. For more information:

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