



Creativity Inspiration Multiculturalism and Environmental Participation in the 21st Century

Judy Ling Wong CBE Honorary President Black Environment Network (BEN)

Black Environment Network

**Working across diverse sectors for
multicultural environmental
participation**

*BEN uses the word “Black” symbolically,
recognising that the black communities are
the most visible of all ethnic groups. We
work with white, black and other ethnic
communities*

***A network of individuals and
organisations working for change***

***Identification with
all disadvantaged groups
Fact of common issues and solutions***

***Methodology of engagement
developed with vulnerable groups
benefit people across all of society***



Extending the meaning of the word “Culture” in the Multicultural World of our 21st Century

- The mobility of people is a prime characteristic of 20th and 21st Century life. We move for educational, social, cultural, environmental, economic reasons within and beyond nations.
- Multiculturalism is defined by presence, not numbers.
- Within the UK, our BAME communities are mostly urban-based.
- Creatively extend the concept of group culture beyond ethnicity and countries of heritage





Climate emergency and biodiversity extinction

An urbanising unequal multicultural world

Population pressure

The Greta Thunberg era

**Era of sound science and
evidence based policy**

Brexit

**The strength of the UK voluntary sector as a social
counterbalance to the political agenda**

**Era of fake news
and media sensation**

**Dark Mountain – collective grief and
deep adaptation**

**Can we create hope and balance
through
the inspiration of
a personal ethos and a personal truth?**

We are MORE

**Nature is
unnecessarily
beautiful**

**What drives us
to achieve more is about
going beyond
the bare bones
of mere survival into the
richness and beauty of
being fully human**



CULTURE DECLARES



“ The role of the arts has a special place in the challenge for full involvement with the present in addressing collective grief, feeding hope and bringing personal positivity and strength to the fore”

Judy Ling Wong CBE

Collective grief – Energy - Responsibility - Action



How do you build a culture
which sees the world as
a living sacred community
of which you are a part?

— Paul Kingsnorth

Time's Gravity by Meryl McMaster

Dark Mountain Project

Deep Adaptation: a map for navigating climate tragedy Jern Bendell

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to provide readers with an opportunity to reassess their work and life in the face of an inevitable near term social collapse due to climate change.

The Basis of Activism – Relevance

**Greening provides a starting point for engagement that links
into social cultural and economic dimensions
to deliver well-being**

Sustainable Development depends on

The relationship of people to the environment

The relationship of people to each other

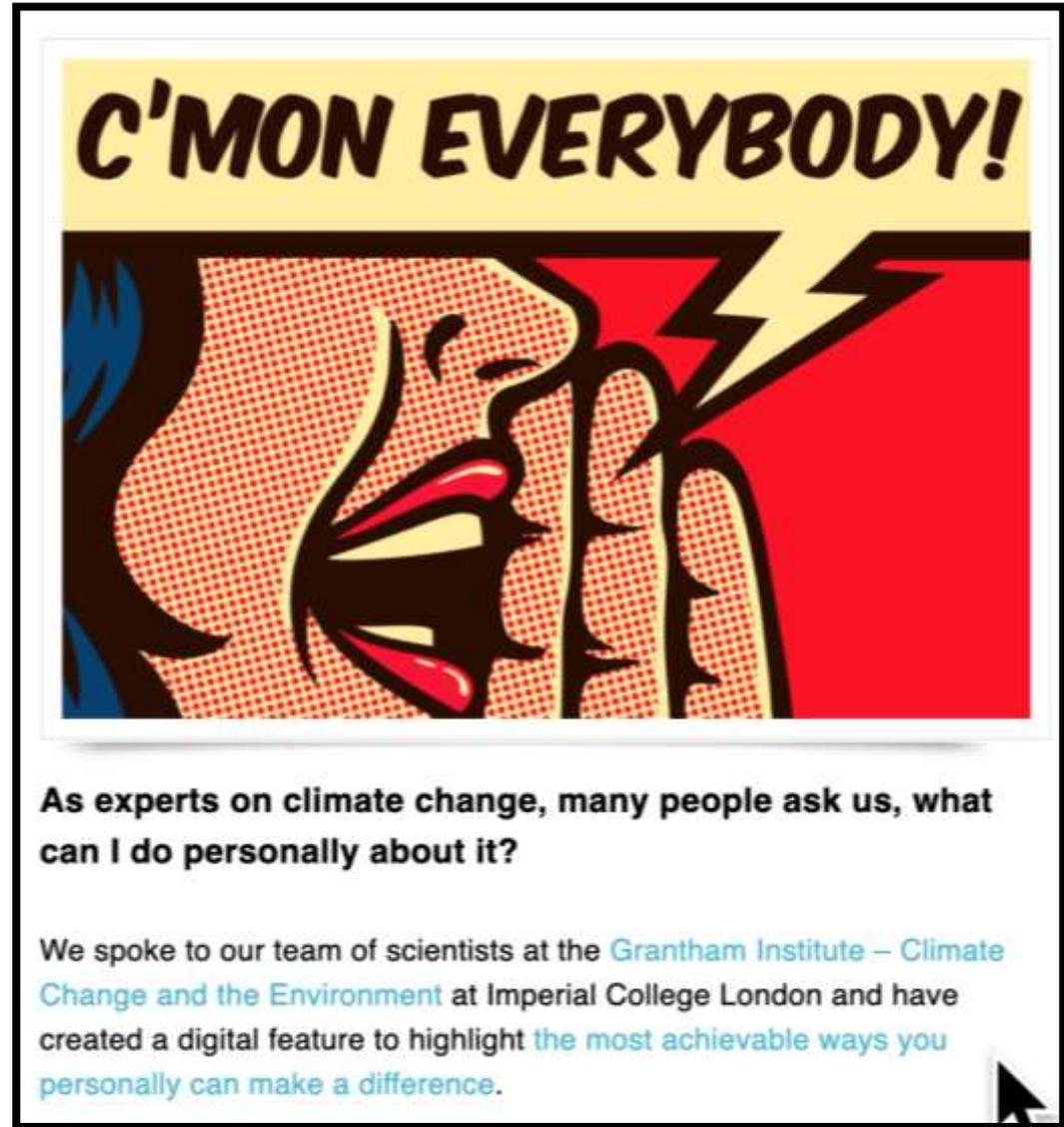


Extinction Rebellion protests in Cardiff (Image Extinction Rebellion)

**“There is no such thing
as a
pure environmental project**

**A so-called
pure environmental project
is one that
has rejected
its social, cultural
and
economic dimensions.”**

Judy Ling Wong 1987

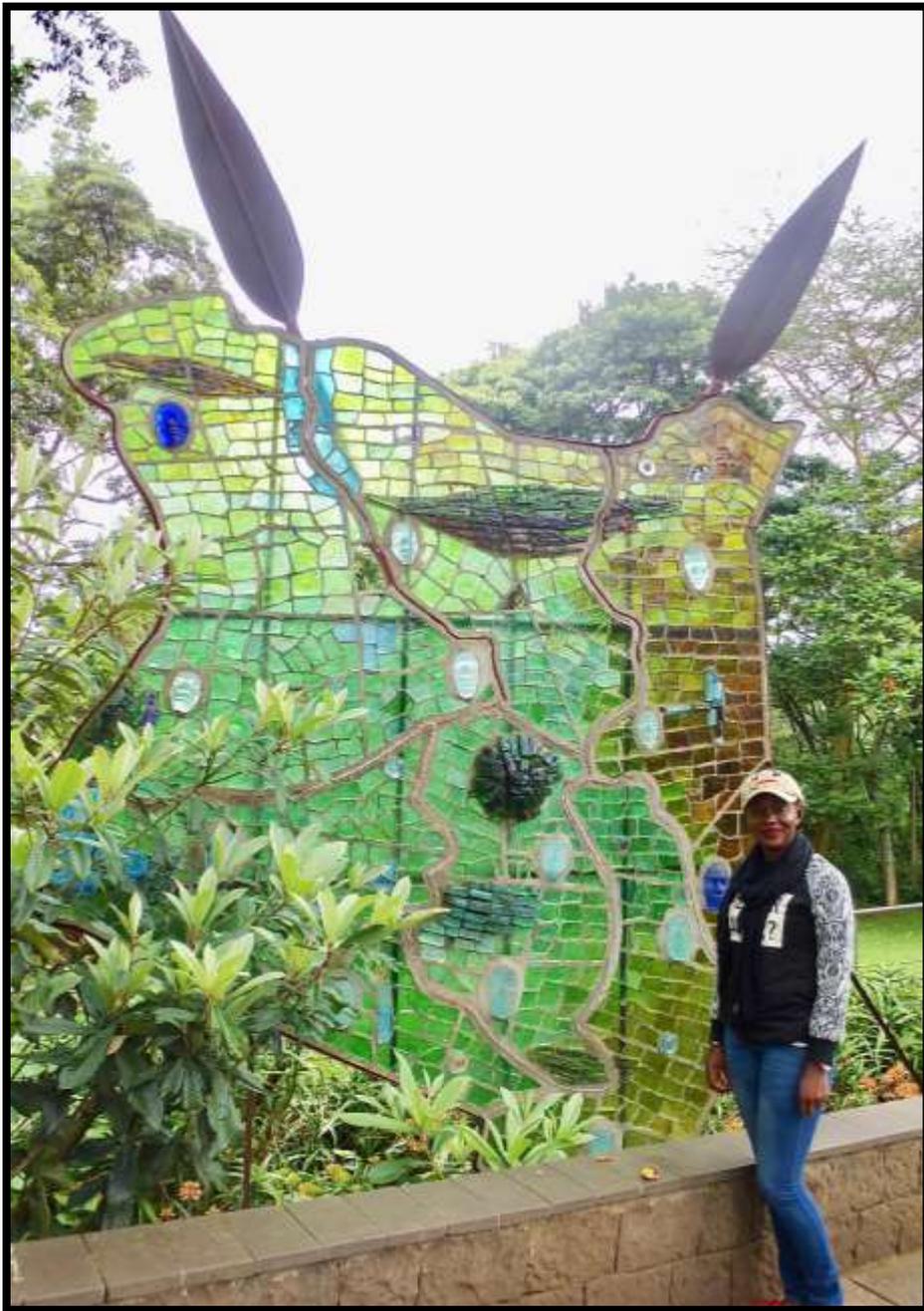


C'MON EVERYBODY!

As experts on climate change, many people ask us, what can I do personally about it?

We spoke to our team of scientists at the [Grantham Institute – Climate Change and the Environment](#) at Imperial College London and have created a digital feature to highlight [the most achievable ways you personally can make a difference.](#)

**9 Things you can do about Climate Change
Grantham Institute**



Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

A more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language... go beyond simple GDP measure towards what affects the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

Our ethnic minorities are local and global people

Google

What do you mean policy?

A **policy** is a set of ideas or plans that is used as a basis for making decisions, especially in politics, economics, or business

What is a policy in government?

A plan or course of action, as of a **government**, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters:

Why is it important to review policies?

Policies and procedures are living documents that should grow and adapt with a company. ... Policy **review** ensures that your **policies** are consistent and effective. **Reviewing policies** and procedures is especially **important** for high-risk or highly regulated industries such as healthcare, public safety, banking, and more.

Topics of environmental policy and economics

Ethics Diversity Equality Poverty Global/Local Social Inclusion Fragmentation



First Global Stakeholders Forum – UN Habitat Assembly – New Urban Agenda

The New Urban Agenda embodies three guiding principles:

Guiding Principles	Actions
Leave no one behind, ensure urban equity and eradicate poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing equitable access for all, to physical and social infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate housing and shelter at the center of the agenda - Public spaces as an enabler of socio-economic function of the city ▪ Recognizing and leveraging culture, diversity and safety in cities ▪ Enabling and strengthening participation and enhancing liveability and quality of life.
Achieve sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhancing agglomeration benefits of urbanization and avoiding land speculation, ▪ Fair and equitable employment creation, productivity, competitiveness, diversification and ▪ Innovation through a sustainable economic development
Foster ecological and resilient cities and human settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Driving sustainable patterns of consumption and production, ▪ Protecting and valuing ecosystems and biodiversity, and ▪ Adapting to and mitigating the impact of climate change while increasing urban systems resilience to physical, economic, and social shocks and stresses

Environment is very low on the political agenda

Can environment rise up the political agenda by linking into the hot topics of the day?

- Diversity
- Gender
- Transgender
- Health and well being
- Representation
- Social cohesion
- Social exclusion
- Poverty

How do these topics link into the economy?

Can we sustain the cost of social failure around these topics resulting from the dominance of a pro-growth economic model?

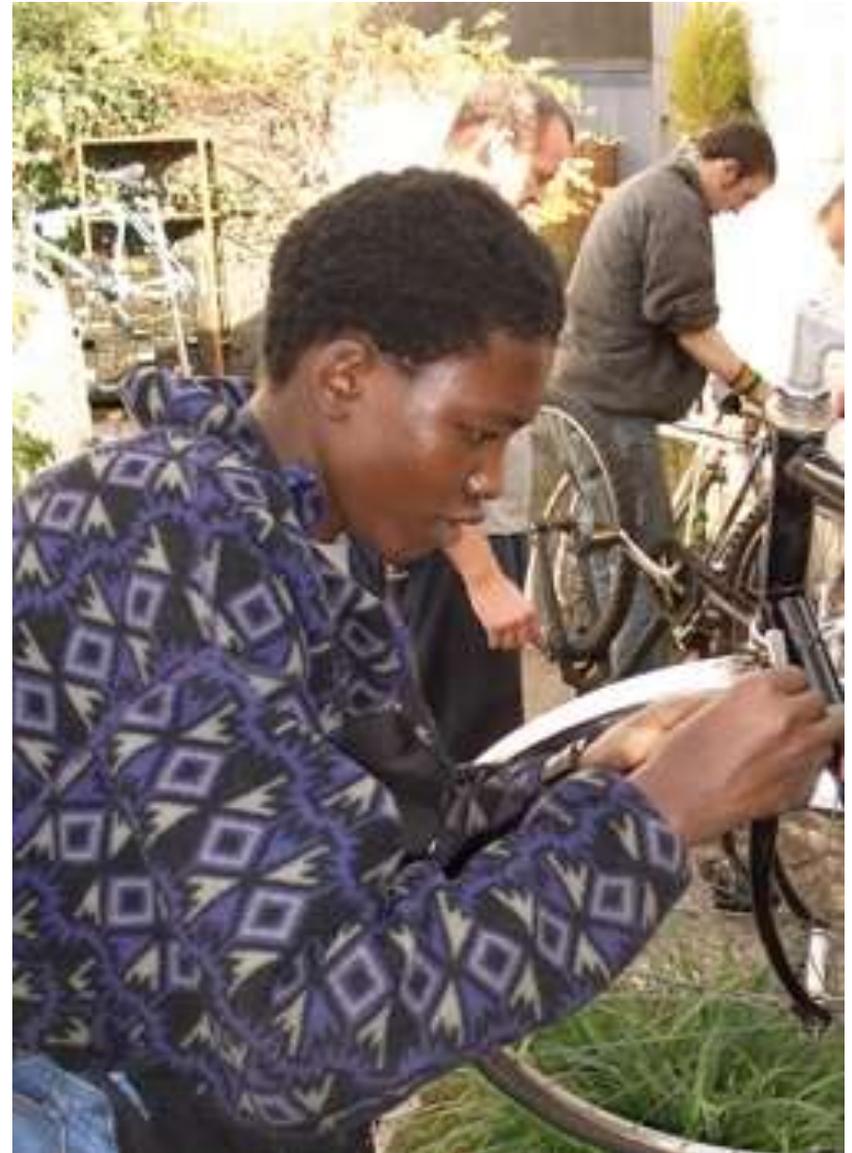
London Mental Health Report 2014

Wider impacts of mental ill health result in around £26 billion a year in total economic and social costs to London.



Physical Health

- The **physicality and pleasure** of enjoying green spaces – walking, running, recreation
- Reducing the the costs of **obesity** to the NHS
- **Fresh healthy food** from food-growing and foraging
- **Attractive cycle routes** encourage use of bikes to school and work
- **Campaigning** against air pollution



Bike Workshop. Wales

Mental Health

- The **wider impacts** of mental ill health affect almost every aspect of a person's life, from their education and employment to their physical health and the quality of their relationships.
- In London close to £7.5billion is spent to address mental ill health, as part of the **£26 billion lost each year** through reduced productivity and reduced quality of life
- The significance of recognition of **cultural presence, history and a sense of belonging**
- The significance of **role models** within different sectors



Recycling Art and other activities in green spaces reduce stress and promote a sense of community

Structures and Frameworks

An introduction to the Equality Act 2010

A new Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises the current legislation to provide Britain with a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

the Equal Pay Act 1970

the Sex Discrimination Act 1975

the Race Relations Act 1976

the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

the Equality Act 2006, Part 2

the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Big Ideas

Ways of Thinking and Seeing

- **London National Park City** paying equal attention to outstanding nature and the potential for wild nature in the built environment
- **Urban Ecology approach** bringing social, cultural, environmental and economic dimensions within an ecological framework





Questions for Leicester Young People's Assembly

- *What will we ask government to do?*
- *What will we ask organisations, business, schools etc. to do?*
- *What we can do in our lives?*
- *How we find the motivation, knowledge skills and resources to do it?*

THE TREE CHARTER

"Natural treasures, in roots, wood and leaves, for beauty, for use, the air that we breathe. Imagine: a wood begins with one small seed. We're stronger together – people and trees."

Harriet Fraser, 2017



Sustain landscapes rich in wildlife



Plant for the future



Celebrate the power of trees to inspire



Recover health, hope and wellbeing with the help of trees



Protect irreplaceable trees and woods

The Charter for Trees, Woods and People sets out the principles for a society in which people and trees can stand stronger together. The Tree Charter was launched in Lincoln Castle on 6 November 2017; the 800th anniversary of the 1217 Charter of the Forest. The Tree Charter is rooted in more than 60,000 'tree stories' gathered from people of all backgrounds across the UK.



Grow forests of opportunity and innovation

[Sign the Tree Charter](#)



Plan greener local landscapes



Strengthen our landscapes with trees



Make trees accessible to all



Combat the threats to our habitats

Tree Charter (2017)

- **60,000 stories**
- **Tree Charter branches project money, activities, information and support**
- **Identify and enjoy trees**
- **Free trees to plant**
- **How to take care of trees**

Access definition - NT Policy Statement

‘Access’ for the purposes of this position statement includes physical access to buildings, intellectual access to ideas and information, and access to services by a wide variety of means. Improved accessibility and greater inclusion benefits everyone, including many people who do not consider they have a disability, or whose disabilities may not be apparent. ‘Access’ undoubtedly has a wider meaning and this will be picked up by the Diversity policy, mentioned below.



Policy Commitment and Resources

- The Government's Natural Environment White Paper (2011)
- Duty to promote race equality - The Race Relations Act 1976 (General Statutory Duty: Code of Practice) Order 2002
- UN Habitat Assembly - New Urban Agenda (2016)
- Political will
- Commitment at the top of organisations – policy, action plans, resource allocation
- Organisational culture
- Alignment with core aims
- Competing priorities

Practical Actions

Environment Sector Organisations

- Organisational structure and capacity
- Cultural knowledge and engagement skills

Social and community organisations

- Organisational structure and capacity
- Environmental knowledge and engagement skills

BAME Communities

- Levels of knowledge of environmental opportunities
- Racism, participation and levels of visibility
- Local champions isolated and lack support

Natural England Commissioned Report NECR127

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

First published 05 September 2013

www.naturalengland.org.uk





THE MOSAIC MODEL



Engaging BME communities in National Parks



Supported by The National Lottery



Capturing Richness

Countryside visits by black and ethnic minority communities



Working for people and places in rural England

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Essentials



Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

A more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language... go beyond simple GDP measure towards what affects the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.





- People from BAME communities visit the natural environment 60% less than the rest of the adult English population.
- The Government's Natural Environment White Paper (2011) aims to strengthen connections between people and nature.... the Government's ambition....is that 'everyone should have fair access to a good quality environment'

Natural England Commissioned Report
NECR127



A Big Endeavour

*Black Environment Network was formed to
unlock the hidden and unmanifested environmental contribution
that is possible only with the full integration of diverse cultural visions*



Searching for and understanding
underlying processes that sustain
and motivate us to take action

The Human Dimension

The basis of voluntary motivation
to protect nature

*“We love what we enjoy
and
We protect what we love”*

Judy Ling Wong 1987



Social Housing. Shoreditch



**Green Infrastructure
allied with
a programme of activities
and
core messages
can powerfully deliver
benefits
for people and for nature**



The Future of access to food through Street Markets – Public Space Debate



- Action, especially within deprived communities, has to be **underpinned by enjoyment** to make it sustainable
- The context for action has to be seen to be **relevant** and at the center of our lives.
- **Multicultural relations** within society enable BAME communities and the mainstream to unite around global issues such as climate change
- Supporting **BAME Local Champions** is a great way forward - **Inreach**
- Our multicultural communities are **intrinsically local/global people**
- **Information** about participation set within **genuine relationships** and **resourced organisational frameworks** for inclusion – **commitment at the top** and **political will** as key drivers



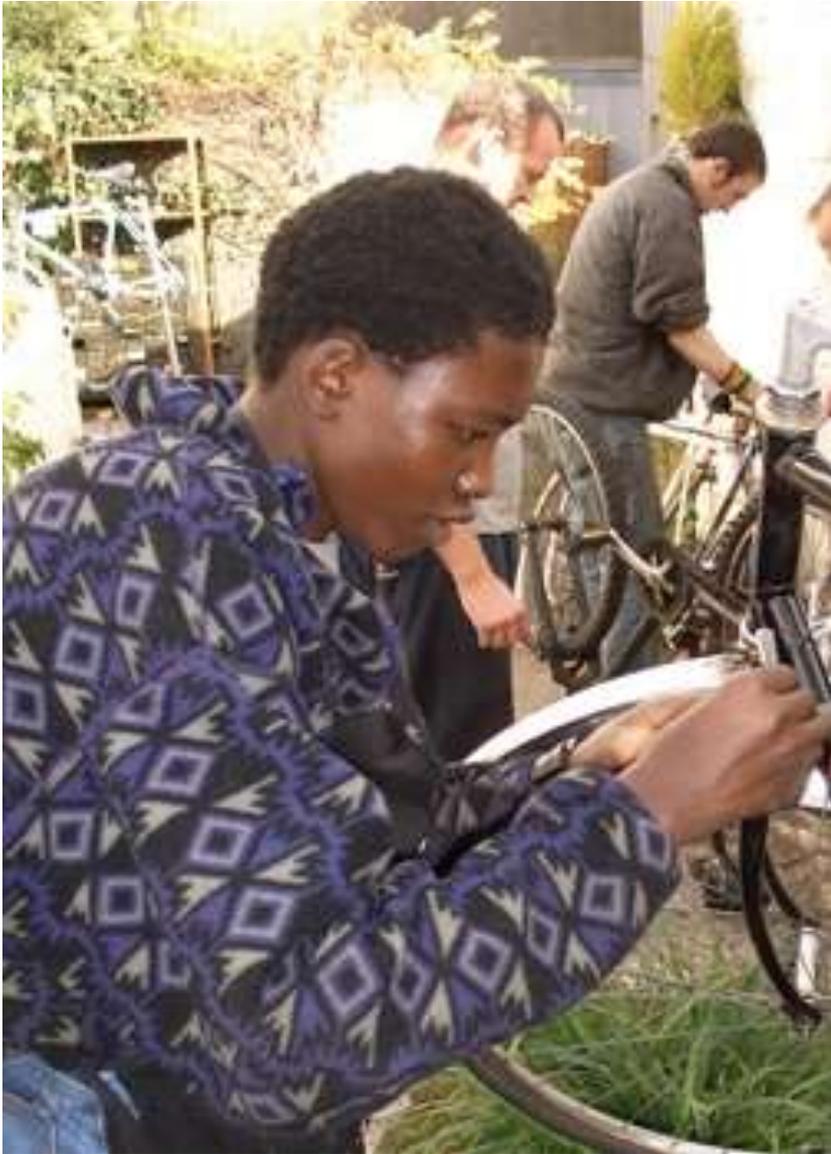
Refugees planting trees. Scotland



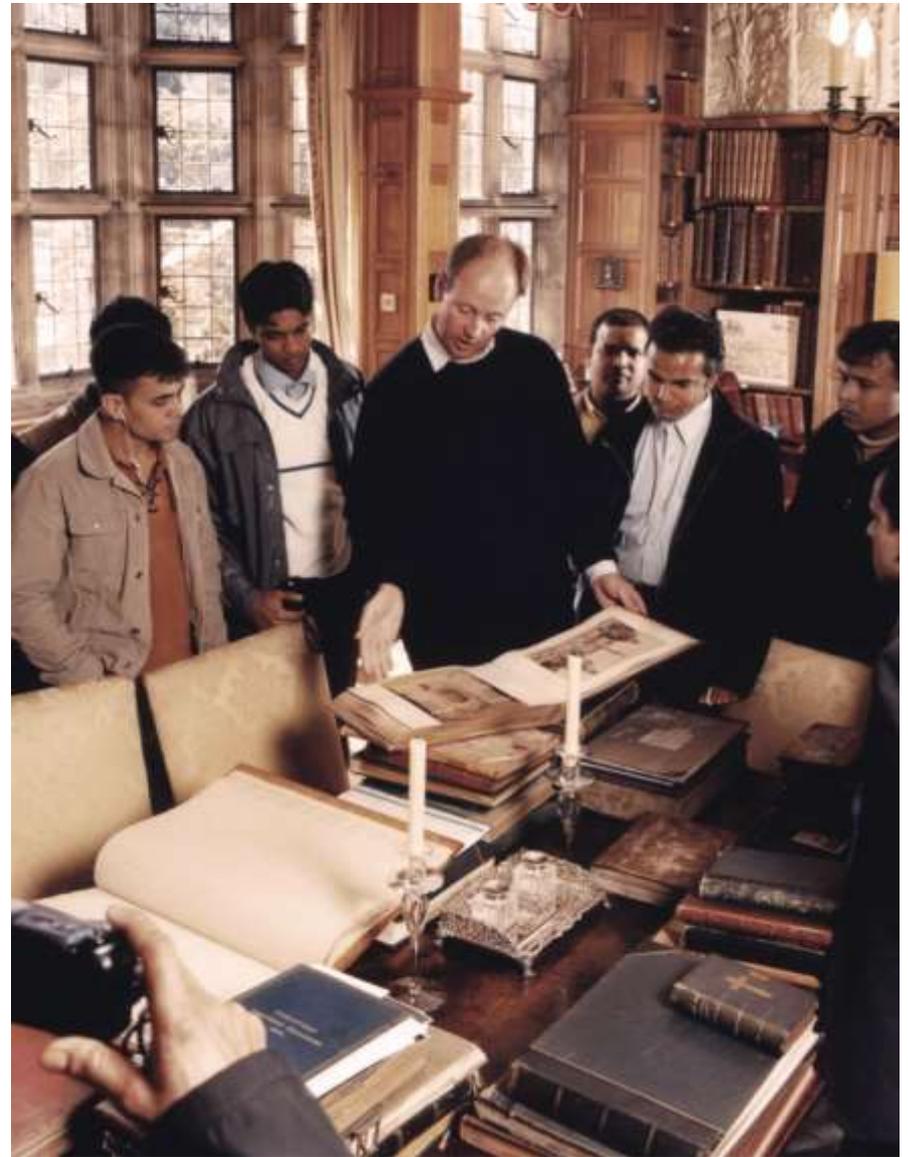
London Group at Broads National Park



Celebrating Tri-Lingual Report on Health and Environment



Bike Workshop



History and Heritage



Outdoor Activities

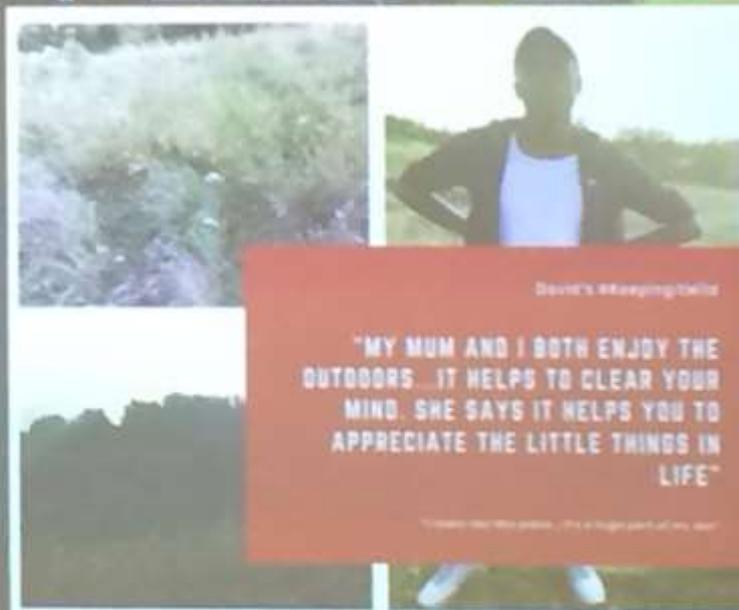


Food Growing

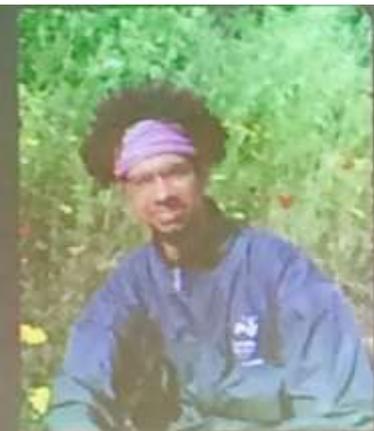


Year 1

- 269 young people engaged (and 52 youth workers)
 - 79% are from BAME communities
 - 37% have some form of disability
 - 44% live in the 20% most deprived communities in the country
- 104 received media skills training with 43 young people gaining an OCN level 1 or 2 accreditation (those over 14 years)
- 52 have gained a John Muir Award
- Activities across 6 LWT reserves and 6 youth clubs

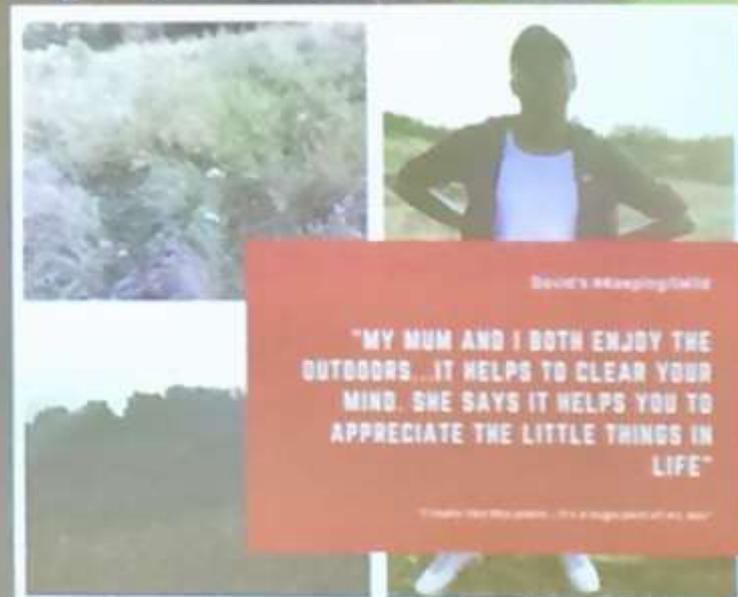


London Wildlife Trust Project

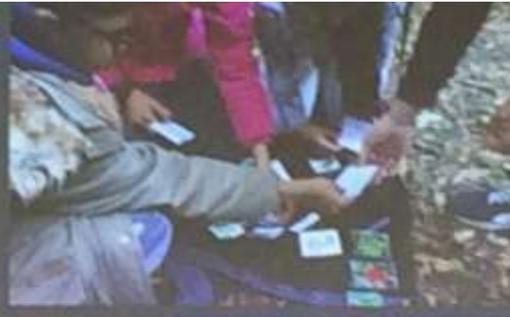


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London Wildlife Trust Project



Increase in ownership and responsibility

- 84% are more likely to visit their local greenspace more regularly
- 84% feel inspired to take action
- 61% now have a greater sense of ownership over their local greenspace



“

The Wild Action Day has shaped a lot of what we do at [our youth organisation], beyond Keeping it Wild.

We had so much fun, but it didn't cost anything. It's what has inspired us to do other trips out - getting out and going to outdoor spaces with other young people. It's the first time we've done anything with a conservation focus”

- Youth worker

London Wildlife Trust Project

Moving from Relational Tolerance to the Contribution of Authenticity

Integration of Head and Heart within the person to address Local and Global Realities

- Rational. Practical. Assertive. Action-oriented. Directive. Evidence-based. Scientific.

With

- Inspiration. Emotion. Magic. Soul. Sensuality. Sensitivity. Spontaneity. Contemplation.

Releasing and increasing the Potential for Environmental Action Integrating Cultural Visions and Values into Sustainability

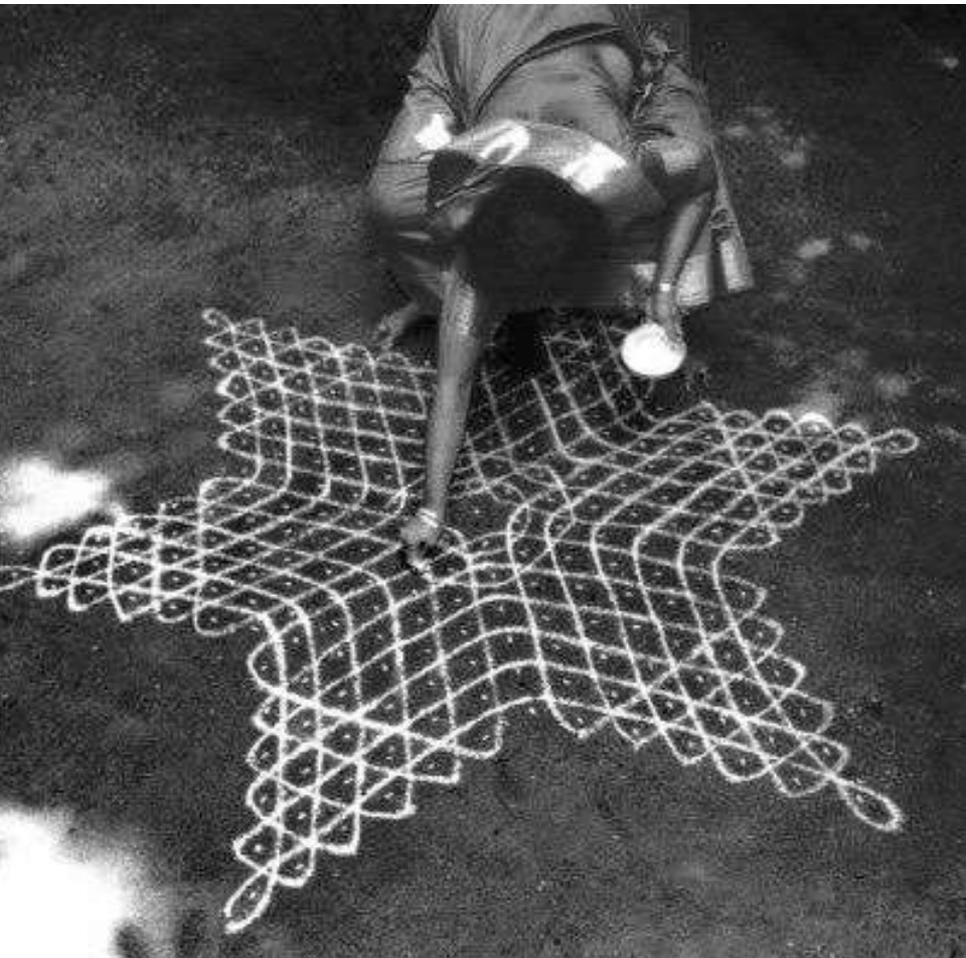
- Authenticity and awareness through fullness of presence
- Creative actions within personal encounter
- Brainstorming cross-cultural solutions within teamwork
- Put into place structures of empowerment for cultural equality
- Incorporating cultural dimensions into committees and in policy work
- Incorporating cultural dimensions into settings for life and work



***Today I went
swallowing skies
to feed my being***

***The seagull cried
wild
against the sliding of the tide***

***“Why
Of all nature
do you choose
to swallow
emptiness?”***



**Alternative culture inspired values and ways of being
Kolams – blessings and ritual in India**



**The vast range of cultural imagination and creativity
Green Village Bali**

How we read our landscape and the ownership of the Land

Dance groups from different parts of the country beside the Cathedral in Mexico City.

As the cathedrals and churches were built on top of sacred sites, the groups are in fact dancing on their sacred land.

Parallel re Druid sites in UK

Mother Earth

Nature as family



Bonsai

A cultural solution to a longing for wildness

Indoor Plants

A connection to the great forests of the world





Khalsa Wood – Marking a Place with Memory
Planting 300 trees to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Khalsa

An integrated and human social, economic and environmental policy depends on how change is seen

Change is the coming together of

Thinking

Feeling

And

Action

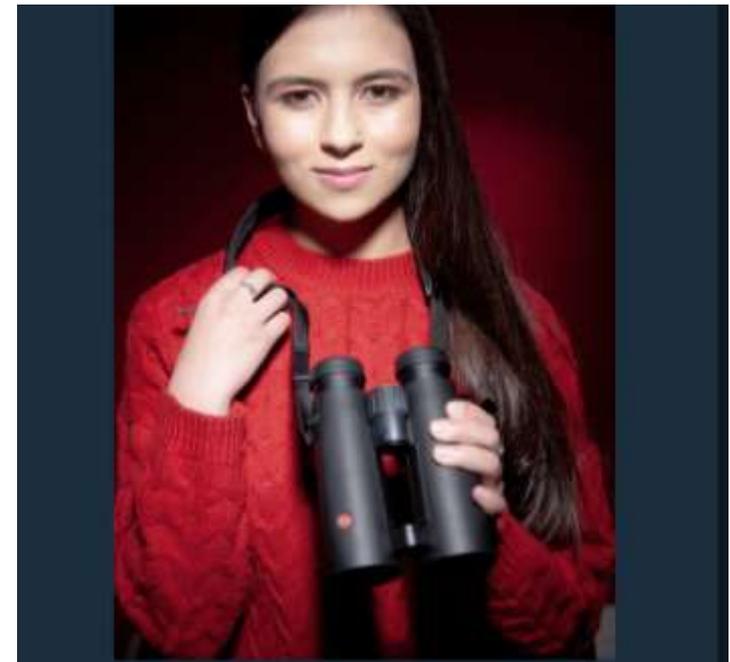


The Times We Are In

In a world in which the dominant structures are degrading life on earth, there is an essential need for humanity to actualise more of its tremendous potential and **co-create alternative paradigms** that are life-supporting, beautiful and whole.

We need opportunities to reflect, listen, get creative, step into one another's shoes, skill up in inclusive decision-making, feel emotions, breathe deeply when it get's uncomfortable, play, speak truth to power and take wise action!

Islamic Environment Network



Young environmentalist and artist Mya-Rose Birdgirl Craig
Copyright Mya-Rose Birdgirl Craig

Mya-Rose Craig is a 17-year-old young British Bangladeshi birder, naturalist, conservationist, environmentalist, activist, writer and speaker. She is based near Bristol and writes posts about birding, conservation and environmental issues from around the world.

She has been involved in the UK organisation of the Youth Strikes encouraging young people from around the world to not go to school once a month and protest instead demanding immediate action to prevent climate breakdown. This is an interview in [New Statesman](#).

She was a Bristol European Green Capital Ambassador along with Kevin McCloud, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Tony Juniper, Simon King, Miranda Krestovnikoff and Shaun the Sheep! See the full list of [Bristol Ambassadors](#). She has also been listed with the singer-

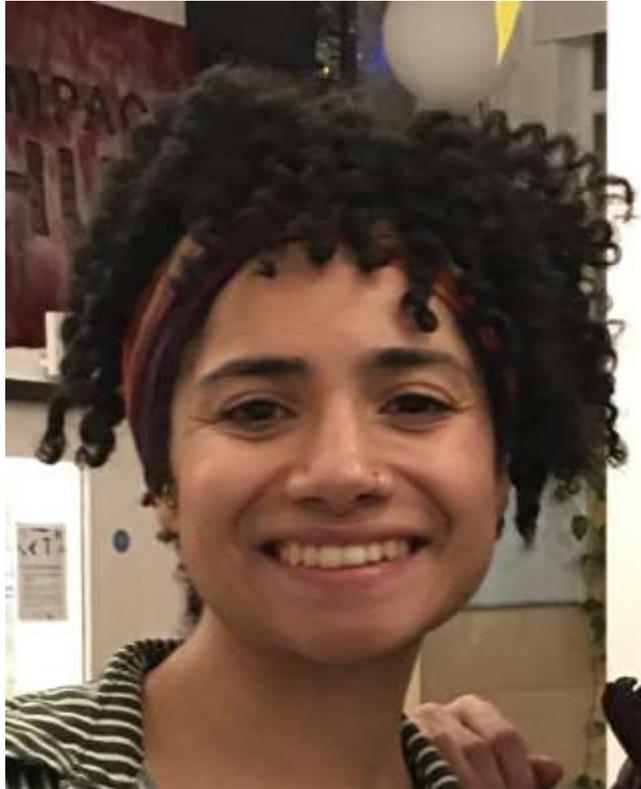
**Birdgirl Mya-Rose. Birder
Campaigner. Tree Charter Champion**



**Environmental Law Foundation
UCLU Student Volunteers Project**



**Rashid Nix – Green Party
Leadership Bid 2018**



Josina Calliste and Ola

Adam

LION

Willowbrook Farm

Land In Our Names

First Halal Farm in UK



Isik Sayerer & Eva Knutsotter

Fourthland

**Social practice merging art and
life to make new myths**

Angela Chan – WORM

**Communicating Climate Change
through art and creative practices**



Beth Collier
Nature-based psychotherapist
Founder Wild in the City
Trustee London National Park City



Maria Adebowale-Schwarte
Urban Renewal Strategist
Board member Environment Agency
Chair Heritage Lottery Fund SE

TALK: CLIMATE CHANGE IS A SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MATTERS

FREE! HOSTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ROTA (RACE ON THE AGENDA)
Why **IS** climate change a **SOCIAL JUSTICE** issue?
What does this mean in **ACTION**? Which **CAMPAINS** matter?
Why you should **#GETINVOLVED!**

Come & join this community learning & networking forum discussing climate change, food, art, Islamic ecology, permaculture, the relationship to social injustices such as racism, sexism, ableism & poverty and more... Hear stories of environmental social action and find out more about campaigning activity in **ISLINGTON** & beyond.

FACILITATED BY NATASHA MUMBI NKONDE

ADITI LING PRANI
Co-ordinator, Rota & Executive Producer of Rota (Race on the Agenda)

IMANA UJAJALE
Executive Director of Rota

DIYA NISSAN

PINK ABDELAK

ORICE ADIWA

MOHAMMAD NISSAN

NELOHI ONISKO

• All Islington
• Campaign Against Climate Change
• Adaptive Health & Climate

SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 10:00AM

Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, N7 6PA
(nearest Tube: Holloway Road)

IT'S TIME TO GET INVOLVED!

@beltslington    #itslslington

BOOK NOW! www.resourceforlondon.org/journey-to-justice

THIS EVENT IS PART OF:

JOURNEY TO JUSTICE ISLINGTON

JOURNEY TO JUSTICE ISLINGTON IS A FREE EXHIBITION & EVENTS PROGRAMME FOCUSING ON THE PEOPLE WHO FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS & EQUITY IN THE US AND HERE.

COMMUNITY

Resource for London



Journey to Justice – Resource for London



**Urban Futures 3 – International Symposium
University of Gloucestershire**



MAY
10

Climate Justice: How Is Global Warming a Racial Issue?

Public · Hosted by Festival of Debate and 3 others



Sheffield University - Festival of Debate

Creativity, Impact and Meaning

Recognise

The World within Britain

**as an opportunity to
work at the local/global reality**

We are all Ethnic Minorities

*A consciousness of power and opportunity
within the ethnic minority population*



The reality of connections with the world - Local and Global people

Habitat III

Today, the majority of people, an estimated 4 billion, live in urban areas. By 2050, it could be 6 billion..... It is clear that **it is in cities where the battle for sustainability will be won or lost.**

UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (2017)

Habitat III has an outcome document. It hopes that heads of state and government *commit to an urban paradigm shift for a New Urban Agenda grounded in the integrated and indivisible dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic, and environmental. This **New Urban Agenda** [is adopted] as a collective vision and a political commitment to promote and realize sustainable urban development, and (...) a **historic opportunity to leverage the key role of cities and human settlements as drivers of sustainable development in an increasingly urbanized world.***

David Maddox. Global Roundtable. The Nature of Cities



From the Ageless Wisdom

**Policy
is
the expression
Of
Love-Wisdom
and
its outcome
is
Beauty**

Diversifying the Environment – People and Nature Thriving Together

- **Policy directions - UN Habitat III New Urban Agenda.** Today, the majority of people, an estimated 4 billion, live in urban areas. By 2050, it could be 6 billion..... It is clear that **it is in cities where the battle for sustainability will be won or lost.** *UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (2017)*
- **Public awareness and visioning – for example urban-rural issues for the future of land use.** “..land is a common good that should deliver shared benefits for everyone. ..new ways of managing parks, woodlands, waterways and green space, that a collaborative, financially sustainable and create livelihoods and shared public benefits...new models of common good land management that generate shared social, environmental and economic benefits. We believe that social enterprises can help deliver them ” *Shared Assets*
- **Provision, access and engagement with green space** - mental and physical health, lifelong learning, leisure and well-being, contribution to care and protection, social and cultural benefits through relevant framing of activities, and giving status to traditional knowledge and skills.
- **Creative nature-based solutions** to social cohesion, equality and diversity, improved knowledge and skills that increase employability, through integration of social, cultural, economic and environmental dimensions. Programmes of activities allied to green infrastructure.
- **Urban Ecology Approach** - bringing together social, cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions within an ecological framework.
- **Extinction Rebellion and the rise of awareness and actions in a time of climate crisis.** The Welsh Government was the first in the UK to declare a climate emergency. Training camp “to ensure that words become actions... towards radical policy changes” with 3 day festival at Ty Gwyn Farm in Borth near a prehistoric forest which was buried under water and sand more than 4500 years ago and uncovered again by Storm Hannah in May.
- **Multiculturalism and Authenticity** – local, national and global mobility resulting in an urbanising world with increasingly diverse populations

**“Who we are
And
What we can achieve
depends on
How we see ourselves
against
The enormous pressure
of
How others see us**

**Getting things right at the core that is ourselves,
And building relationships are the keys to policy and
actions for positive environmental change.**

**If we can act as one, locally and globally,
in all our richness,
we are well on the way to
meeting the 21st Century challenge and
reaping greater successes. ”**



Black Environment Network

Resources and publications

[http://www.ben-
network.org.uk/resource
/pubs.aspx](http://www.ben-network.org.uk/resource/pubs.aspx)

Contact:

judy@ben-network.org.uk

