

BEN Green Spaces Project Focus Group – Green Pepys Fair 12.09.04

The Green Pepys Fair took place in 12.09.04 in Pepys Park, Grove Street, Deptford, London, SE8. BEN attended with an information stall and interactive display, offering the public an opportunity to feed in their comments on the question “What would you like to do or see in green spaces?” The results of this informal survey are appended below.

We invited members of the public and stall-holders to this workshop on ethnic community participation in green spaces. 6 people attended. Participants were not monitored for ethnicity, but I was able to establish incidentally that ethnic backgrounds included Irish, Kenyan Asian and French. The other three members of the group were from ‘visible’ ethnic minorities, quite probably Central African and Kurdish. There were equal numbers of men and women.

1/ How many of you were interested in green spaces before you were invited to this focus group?

6

Johnny
Shirley
Nico
Valja
Teresa
Mohamed

2/ What is a green space?

Parks
Nature in the city
Place where people and nature meet
Safe place for children to play
Flowers
Picnic areas
Woodland
Places to promote ethnic communities presence
It's a recreation area where there is an open field with a very good earthy atmosphere

3/ How have you used green spaces?

Picnics
Lunch break
Lie down
Relax

Enjoy the sunshine
Have a nap
Play football, cricket, sports
Community fairs
Circus

4/ What would you like to do or see in green spaces?

Festival
Organise sports
More games for children
Wardens for safety
Climb trees
Wild flowers
Watching wildlife
Increasing wildlife
Fruit trees
Walking
Eating
Fun fare
Promote multiculturalism

5/ Have you been involved in the use, improvement or creation of green spaces?

Conservation volunteering
 Building conservatories
 Making pots to plant flowers
Signed petitions to save green spaces
Tried to introduce green spaces in school playground – mural, picnic bench

6/ What puts you off using green spaces?

Dirty
Dogs
Rubbish
If grass is not cut
If grass is too short
People – fighting
Fear for my safety
Need to protect our children from bad people
Rain, bad weather
Need to pay to book sports facilities
Traffic noise
Don't know when the gates will be open and closed

7/ What puts you off getting involved in the care and improvement of green spaces?

Childcare responsibilities
No opportunity
not asked
too busy, need more notice

8/ What puts you off getting involved in the creation of green spaces?

Administration, paperwork, red tape
Lack of money, fundraising
Time
Lack of opportunity
Demoralisation – some people support us, some oppose us.
Vandalism

9/ What will encourage us to become more involved?

Put hands together, work as a team
Good ideas, inspiration
Local authority support eg equipment, protective clothing
Clear plans and aims
Expertise, skills eg building, landscaping, fundraising
Keep the environment tidy and clean, nice atmosphere, good maintenance, fresh air
Respect and support, acknowledgement for our contribution, not to feel side-lined
Cultural relevance eg mandala, plants from different countries (like Eden project)
Listening to our comments increases our zeal
Respond to our comments
Role models
Initiators

10/ Is there anything else you would like to add?

These are facts about green spaces about which we as a group all agree unanimously.

Appendix

Results of interactive survey “What would you like to do or see in green spaces?”

- Fruit trees
- Green Spaces in - - are only a glimpse of virgin nature. I'd like to see urban green spaces designed to be more interactive with visitors.
- Local artists installations, on a rotational basis
- More emphasis on wildlife
- Play area for older children and adults. Climbing walls, games etc.
- Allotments
- Vegetarian cafés, nice cups of tea.
- Set aside areas for wildlife
- Anybody who thinks about building on green spaces should be sacked on the spot!
 - Benches
 - Pagodas
 - Fountains
 - Gardens
 - Statues
 - Ponds
 - Space for sunbathing