

Black Majority Churches Environmental Project

The Aim

To encourage the Black Christian Community to initiate environmental action & improvements in their local communities

Supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Special Grants Programme

Pilot Study Appeal:

Churches that agreed to participate in the study included:

- 8 different denominations
- churches with large and small congregations
- a church without its own premises
- churches with majority African, Asian or Caribbean congregations

Black Majority Churches Environmental Project

What was done:

- ⇒ church services held to dedicate the Social Action Co-ordinators, working groups and projects to be undertaken
- ⇒ two church allotment projects (Handsworth and Southall)
- ⇒ a community drop-in (a day event, then 5 day event, now monthly)
- ⇒ an educational trip for children sponsored by British Waterways
- ⇒ a church participating in a 'Democracy Day' event
- ⇒ a church energy/waste management survey

Black Majority Churches Environmental Project Lozells Community Clean-Up



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Lozells Community Clean-Up

Origin: - Gathering of the Birmingham pilot churches

- ⇒ social action co-ordinators and working groups from different churches expressed an interest to carry out a joint clean-up project
- ⇒ as well as local churches, support was gained from Birmingham City Council, Commercial Companies, Groundwork, Lozells Trading Association and other community groups

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Lozells Community Clean-Up

Outcomes:

- ⇒ 70 people took part in the event, 50 from local churches
- ⇒ 180 bags of rubbish were gathered and graffiti removed from 5 prioritised sites
- ⇒ received sponsorship
- ⇒ media coverage
- ⇒ inspired clean-ups in other areas
- ⇒ ownership of sites
- ⇒ empowered the community and helped to restore a sense of hope

Black Majority Churches Environmental Project Engaging Faith Groups

⇒ Discover Project Champions

- Leader may signpost to interested/influential personnel
- Utilise suitable methods to communicate information

⇒ Learn about current programmes and ethos of organisation

⇒ Gain the trust and endorsement of leadership

⇒ Offer practical assistance

- Provide direct local contacts and information
- Signpost to appropriate funding and training provisions

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What we have learnt

Issues:

- ⇒ Local Environmental Quality - a key issue for residents in deprived community
- ⇒ Council Delivery - strategic
- cultural
- ⇒ Regeneration - raising environmental delivery from Cinderella status
- ⇒ Working with and through faith groups/networks
- research and practice → effective

Engaging with Communities

through local environmental improvements

A guide for Black Majority Churches and other Faith Communities

Engaging Faith Communities

in local environmental improvements

A guide for Local Authorities, Statutory and Voluntary Organisations

The booklets can be obtained by telephoning the ENCAMS enquiry line on **01942 612639**.

They can also be downloaded from **www.encams.org/enhance**