

URBAN BRITAIN IN BLOOM

AN EVALUATION STUDY

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for

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1. Introduction

Urban Britain in Bloom (UBiB) was established by the Tidy Britain Group (now ENCAMS) in 1998, with funding from the Community Fund (formerly the National Lottery Charities Board). UBiB was a three year programme which aimed to encourage local community groups in inner city and other urban areas to improve their environments.

The programme was designed to achieve three overall objectives:

- to make available (to successful applicants) easy-to-access small grants and other support in order to support planting schemes in areas which had not been involved in the main Britain in Bloom initiative
- to encourage these groups to move on from initial small-scale planting schemes to wider environmental improvement activities, and
- for participants to adopt environmentally sustainable techniques in their planting schemes and, potentially, more widely.

This evaluation report has been commissioned to provide an overview of the UBiB scheme at the end of its three years of funding from the Community Fund. In addition to a general summary of achievements of the programme (in terms of groups involved, projects undertaken, etc), the evaluation was designed to particularly examine the learning processes experienced by community groups to "enable those working to enhance local sustainability to better understand the process of bringing about change and to develop their practice accordingly" (tender brief, July 2001). Rather than attempt an in depth study and analysis of these learning processes, the brief stated that "the study should be concise and directly related to the work" of the UBiB programme.

This study has been carried out as part of a larger project which includes undertaking a similar evaluation of ENCAMS Sustainable Communities Project (SCP), in order to make proposals for the development of joint UBiB/SCP learning networks in order to maximise the sharing and dissemination of learning from the two programmes. Outputs from the separate, but associated, evaluation of the SCP programme will be available later in 2002.

2. Methodology

The original methodology proposed in the evaluation brief involved a review of documentation and meetings with the two UBiB staff in London and the North East of England, and the overall UBiB Co-ordinator in Wigan.

An extensive review of documentation was undertaken, including of the interim evaluation of the UBiB programme carried out at the end of Year 2 (2000). Interviews with staff were more problematic. Substantial information and feedback was provided by the UBiB national co-ordinator but, due to timetabling difficulties, one of the two staff had left their posts by the time the evaluation took place (NE England), and the other was on maternity leave (London). However, a telephone interview was carried out with the ex-UBiB office for the NE England.

In addition, telephone interviews were carried out with 17 local groups which received grants. Those interviewed were a random sample taken from the full list of grant recipients, and then adjusted to ensure appropriate geographical coverage. The interview sample was also checked to ensure inclusion of at least one group associated with the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens, and one with the Peabody Trust, as these two organisations had been enthusiastic partners on the UBiB scheme. The final list of groups identified for interview met all these criteria.

See Annex A for the list of groups identified for interview, showing those contacted (some could not be contacted); Annex B for the questionnaire used in the telephone interviews; Annex C for the full list of grant recipients.

Although a relatively small proportion of groups were interviewed, the consistency of their responses suggests that the views received may be taken as indicative of a wider consensus.

The remainder of this report covers the findings from this research, and is structured as follows:

- The UBiB programme in operation
- Types of projects undertaken
- Who was involved (nature of communities and groups)
- Achievements and caveats
- Learning and change
- Summary and conclusions

3. The UBiB programme in operation

3.1 Aims and approach

The overall aim of Britain in Bloom is to "motivate and enable communities to take control of their own local environment and do something positive and practical to make improvements" (initial application to the National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB) for UBiB). The specific objectives of UBiB are described in different ways in different documents. The three overall objectives have already been outlined (see Introduction). The Business Plan for the UBiB programme also sets out specific aims for the programme, as follows:

- To promote Britain in Bloom to a wider audience, in particular to those disadvantaged sectors of the community not previously involved in 'The Bloom', eg those in urban and inner city areas.
- To promote Britain in Bloom to the 50+ age group (right across the social and ethnic spectrum)
- To improve the accessibility and standard of Britain in Bloom entries, through better resourcing (information pack, regional bursaries for inner city and urban areas, regional seminars and increased staffing)
- In particular to promote a sustainable gardening message to Bloom participants, encouraging the issues of water and energy conservation, pollution and biodiversity into 'The Bloom' at grass roots level - issues which have now been agreed at the highest level as part of Britain in Bloom policy
- To encourage volunteering and sharing of skills and information within the community, between different target groups
- Through Britain in Bloom to return local pride and bring about local economic regeneration ie increases in tourism / an increase in new businesses attracted to the area.

In summary, therefore, the UBiB programme was designed both to meet its own specific objectives (see Introduction), and to increase participation in Britain in Bloom from new areas and different sectors of the population. More specifically, the programme was intended to reach new groups in areas of urban deprivation (especially in inner cities): "to target those depressed areas which are most in need of regeneration and environmental improvement and bring back local pride".

The priority target audiences were identified as socially disadvantaged groups in urban and inner city areas, people from black and minority ethnic communities and the 50+ age group. The programme was also intended to encourage volunteering and to "encourage sustainable horticulture" as part of the overall aim of Britain in Bloom to encourage "long term and sustainable programmes of enhancement".

Urban Britain in Bloom covered the whole of the UK, across 18 ENCAMS regional and country offices including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (more details are given below on the geographical spread of activities and projects).

The programme had three staff, none of which were full-time. Two staff were appointed to manage and administer the programme, one based in London and one in the North East of England. These staff were originally 50% appointments, but this was increased to about 75% as a result of workload. There was also a national programme co-ordinator (a permanent member of ENCAMS staff) based in ENCAMS office in Wigan. The two 'regional' staff were responsible for contact with groups, but the national co-ordinator also undertook many visits and provided support to groups as much as possible, especially in certain areas (eg Wales). See section 3.4 on Support for more details.

3.2 Small grants

Special funding was sought for UBiB, from the National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB - since renamed the Community Fund), to take Britain in Bloom into the new areas described above, through the provision of small grants (typically £500) to community groups and others who met the criteria. Grants were intended to support various activities including buying tools, containers, etc; publicity costs; costs of running groups (eg meeting rooms); as well as covering costs of plants etc. Practical support and advice was also offered.

Grant application forms were distributed in the UBiB information pack, and groups were required to make postal applications to the national UBiB office (in Wigan). Contact details for ENCAMS regional offices were also provided. Applications were considered at regular intervals by a Grants Panel (see section 3.5 for details).

Funding was made available to UBiB from the Community Fund from 1998 to 2001, with the first grants being made to groups in April 1999. By the end of the programme:

- 3,075 information packs had been distributed, containing application forms for the small grants scheme
- 620 groups had applied to the programme
- 363 grants had been made.

The vast majority of grants were of £500, with a very small number of grants of £1,000. The total spending breakdown was roughly as follows:

- Total budget (from Lottery funding): £483,000
- Grants: £176,000
- Publicity, promotion and other materials (eg T shirts, information pack, leaflets, etc): £134,000
- Support to groups, admin and management (including staff): £173,000.

3.3 Publicity and promotion methods and materials

A range of materials were produced for the UBiB programme including leaflets and an information pack.

Publicity leaflets were produced in Gujarati and Welsh as well as English. There was one application (out of a total of 620) in Gujarati, and one in dual English/Welsh. However, the lack of applications in Welsh and Gujarati should not be seen as a weakness in the publicity material: the mere fact that the effort was made to translate the information for specific groups showed a willingness on the part of the programme's organisers to receive applications from these groups, which is to be commended and is likely to have been received positively by the intended audiences.

The information pack, *Brighten Up Your Neighbourhood*, explained how the scheme worked, and included the application form for grants. The pack also included three case studies (initially, then just one in later print runs), and some brief guidance on community composting, recycling and getting involved with National Spring Clean (Tidy Britain Group's anti-litter campaign). It also included some useful contacts including of the ENCAMS regional offices.

The application form, circulated in the information pack, and the application procedure were clearly not obstacles to groups. The success rate was high (363 successful applications out of a total of 620 enquiries = around 59%), and the feedback on the form and process was generally very positive, according to the interim evaluation in 2000. That research found that only one respondent out of 97 felt the application form was not easy to complete (under 1%) and only three felt the instructions for the procedure were unclear (less than 3%).

The primary route for contacting community groups was through existing Tidy Britain Group / Britain in Bloom contacts in local authorities. Information was circulated to them and they were asked to pass it on to those groups they felt would be interested and would meet the criteria. In addition, contacts in local government and other organisations dealing with disadvantaged communities were identified. The initial mailing list therefore also included Single Regeneration Budget managers and other senior managers in local government, and managers of housing associations.

The UBiB interim evaluation (2000) found that

- 40% of respondents had heard about the programme through their local authority
- 22% had heard about the programme from 'other' sources, of which the largest single source (apart from Tidy Britain Group directly) was the local Groundwork trust
- 14% had seen an article in a newspaper
- 13% had heard about it from a local Britain in Bloom group
- 10% from a housing association (UBiB had intended to reach groups through housing association and had worked particularly closely with the Peabody Trust, which works primarily in London).

Clusters of groups receiving grants can also be seen to have emerged from areas where there was a particularly enthusiastic and effective local worker. For example, the Sustainable Communities Project in Renfrewshire generated 14 successful applications in the Paisley / Renfrew area alone; and the cluster around Newport (4 in Newport alone) was considered by UBiB staff to be due to the efforts of the Wales in Bloom officer, who is based in Newport council.

In addition to the mailings via local authorities and housing associations, the UK UBiB Co-ordinator also made presentations at

- six Tidy Britain Group, Keep Wales Tidy, Tidy Northern Ireland and Keep Scotland Beautiful seminars
- 18 Britain in Bloom meetings
- taking stands at 10 gardening, flower and environmental events
- addressing eight meetings run by other networks.

The meetings run by other networks were quite varied and included North West People and Places Network meeting, Wigan; Biodiversity and Community Action seminar, Birmingham; Bright and Clean Awayday, Manchester; North East Local Agenda 21 Liaison Group meeting, Morpeth; Biodiversity Theme Month Launch, Leeds; Ecofun 2000, Cardiff; and the Community Composting Network Demonstration Day, Sheffield. The geographical range, and range of types of events participated in, is likely to have contributed to the geographical spread of applications.

The programme staff clearly made extensive efforts to reach their target audiences (ie over 50 year olds, black and minority ethnic groups, and disadvantaged groups). However, the emphasis on working through mainstream Britain in Bloom and Tidy Britain Group events may not have reached as many of the intended target groups as could have been reached through other routes.

Although many disadvantaged communities are likely to have been reached through the SRB officers, there may have been an unexpected barrier here in that urban regeneration in England does not currently have an explicit environmental dimension, either in terms of the environmental impact of regeneration initiatives, or in terms of the potential for environmental improvements and activities to contribute to regeneration, even if initiated and supported by community groups and even though such community action is an explicit focus of current regeneration programmes.

In practice, therefore, although the publicity and promotion routes used may have been appropriate in terms of reaching disadvantaged communities, it may not have been the most effective in encouraging environmental action by those communities. The linking of environmental activity to regeneration is an area where Groundwork trusts have particular expertise, and it is instructive to note that groups mentioned Groundwork trusts as an important route through which they found out about the UBiB programme.

A similar difficulty is likely to have arisen as a result of links to housing associations, where there is also a lack of history and experience of environmental action (with some notable exceptions, of which the Peabody Trust is one). However, the potential benefits of creating or strengthening these links between environmental action and regeneration / housing organisations should not be underestimated (see below).

The UBiB programme did not work directly with the national and local organisations most active with their target audiences. There was no contact with any of the major national organisations working with older people (eg Age Concern, Help the Aged, National Pensioners Convention etc), nor with those linking black and minority ethnic and disadvantaged communities with environmental issues especially through concepts such as environmental justice, environmental equality and environmental exclusion (eg Black Environment Network and Capacity / UK Environmental Justice Network), nor with those working specifically with voluntary and community groups concerned with

urban regeneration (eg Urban Forum). There were also no direct links through any of the various organisations which have for many years worked with disadvantaged urban communities on environmental issues such as Groundwork UK, Shell Better Britain Campaign, BTCV, urban wildlife groups, health and sport initiatives.

Although UBiB did not work through these most obvious gatekeeper organisations to reach their specific target audiences (see above), the channels they did choose were clearly central to programmes to tackle urban disadvantage. Although this may not have been the most effective strategy for reaching the target audiences identified, the association with UBiB may have helped the organisations the programme did work through, and individuals within them, become more aware of the benefits of simple practical environmental improvements, both in terms of increasing community participation and in supporting more long term regeneration measures (eg immediate and visible improvements achieved while waiting for more extensive - and possibly less visible - improvements).

The focus in UBiB materials on sustainability may also have helped to inform these regeneration organisations about some of the wider environmental issues (and global implications) of local activities. The circulation of information packs is often seen to be simply a way of generating applications, but where these also include specific information on sustainability issues, they can contribute to increasing general awareness. The UBiB packs did contain such material - on reducing use of water, organic growing methods, composting and recycling (and re-use of materials). 3,075 packs were distributed throughout the UK, and it is reasonable to assume that the messages of environmental sustainability they contained were absorbed by at least some of the recipients.

One final point to be borne in mind in terms of effective publicity and promotion is timescales. It was clear from the telephone interviews with groups (carried out for this study) that a three year programme of this sort is too short. It takes a long time for information to filter out to community level, whatever mechanisms are used, and then for people to know it is available, think about it and then apply. This extended timescale needs to be born in mind in designing future programmes.

3.4 Support for groups

In addition to the small grants and information pack, the programme offered additional support including:

- help with applications and the grant-making process
- regional and local community workshops.

The interim evaluation (in 2000) found that 73% of respondents had contacted UBiB staff, for the following reasons:

- 54% with a general enquiry about the programme
- 32% with an enquiry regarding the success of their application
- 25% with an enquiry regarding receipt of the cheque
- 16% for help with completing the form
- 15% for other reasons (including requests for a visit (3), invitations to events and requests for other basic information such as the closing date for applications).

The interim evaluation also asked groups whether they felt certain other (specified) support would be useful. The results showed that:

- 79% would have liked advice on other sources of funding
- 54% would have like expert advice on gardening and environmental issues
- 52% wanted information to be circulated from other projects
- 25% wanted help in getting publicity.

These clear requests for support will be picked up again later in this report.

Although no formal commitment was given to groups that they could expect a visit from project staff, and no formal records of visits were kept, it is estimated by UBiB staff that:

- The UK Co-ordinator visited about 30 groups across the UK
- The two other staff visited groups in their immediate region (ie almost all 45 London groups and around 40-45 in the North East of England).

Overall, the level of interest from local groups was much higher than expected when the scheme was originally planned, and this put considerable pressure on staff, although they did try to ensure that they visited (at least once) each group which received a grant. The staff also provided support and learning opportunities wherever possible, through the visits and occasional special activities eg

hanging basket workshops. However, time constraints limited staff ability to develop these, although they were very keen to do so - and did what they could.

These visits were useful for groups, to give them support in making applications and a sense of being part of a wider realm of activity through participation in a national scheme. They were also useful for the programme as a whole as staff could get a real sense of the types of groups applying and the types of projects they were undertaking.

The original UBiB programme included ambitious plans to supplement this informal support through running regional and local community workshops to provide opportunities for groups to gain access to further information and advice: one in each nation / region - a total of 17. These workshops, and the lessons from the experience of planning and running them, are described below (see section 7. Learning and Change).

For this study, we also examined in more detail whether groups received support from the UBiB programme, whether they received support and advice from elsewhere and, if so, where, and which sources they found best. The findings were:

- 12 (out of 15) respondents said they had not received any support through UBiB; 10 said they had not received any support, advice or training from anywhere.
- 3 groups said they had received some support from UBiB, and 5 said they had received advice and training from elsewhere: sources quoted were 'a book', suppliers, a gardener from the housing association, and a council area manager. Sources mentioned as particularly helpful were the Groundwork trust, the ENCAMS Sustainable Communities Project and a tutor from a local college.
- 5 respondents said they wanted more help, but 9 said they didn't. Help sought included:
 - "someone to help us plan for the year ahead"
 - "support for future work"
 - "help with fundamental problem" ie not getting anyone to do the work
 - "advice for follow up"
 - "some expert advice".

Reflections from UBiB staff suggest that support is most needed at pre-application stage, both to enable the groups to find the project they want to do which fits the criteria for funding support, and to enable staff to inject information about sustainability at the earliest possible planning stages. At this point, a valuable dialogue can take place which helps shape projects and test feasibility. Staff input at this stage can thus be particularly valuable both to groups and to meeting the objectives of the funding programme, especially to groups and areas such as those targeted in UBiB where lack of experience with community activity, and in some cases lack of basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, need to be taken into account.

In addition, support immediately after the grant is approved can be extremely useful, to help groups turn a grant application into a practical project. With 620 applications, 363 of which were successful, such support was clearly impossible in this programme. As a result, further opportunities to disseminate messages about sustainability, and to provide practical and moral support to groups (many of which had never interacted with authority or formal institutions in this way before) were reduced. Additional staff resources, directly employed by the programme or attached to other organisations operating in the area, could have allowed the programme to achieve more in these areas. The regional workshops and learning networks, designed to meet these needs, were developed as the programme progressed (see section 7. Learning and Change for details).

3.5 Accountability

The measures introduced as part of the UBiB programme to ensure accountability were essentially:

- A Grants Panel to assess applications for funding
- Regular reports to the Community Fund (formerly NLCB) which funded the entire scheme, including a detailed interim evaluation in 2000
- A final evaluation, of which this report is one product.

The Grants Panel was made up of five voting and four non-voting members:

- Chair: the relevant departmental director in ENCAMS, most recently Brian Johnson, Director of Research and Development
- The manager of financial services in ENCAMS
- The national co-ordinator of Britain in Bloom, ENCAMS
- The national co-ordinator of the Green Fingers Challenge, ENCAMS
- Maurice Baren, a member of the Yorkshire in Bloom committee
- The two non-voting members were:
 - Chris de Sa, national co-ordinator of UBiB, ENCAMS, and secretary to the Grants Panel
 - Diane Alldred, ENCAMS funding team (to advise on NLCB guidelines)
 - Katrina Slack, Project Support Officer South
 - Margot Hardman, Project Support Officer North

Terms of reference for the Panel were produced in May 1999, and these guided all the Panel's activities. The Panel met 14 times between May 1999 and April 2001, and all Panel meetings were formally minuted and decisions recorded. The overall working method of the Panel was to divide applications into four categories:

- those which could be approved immediately
- those which could be approved subject to minor clarification on certain points
- those which needed considerably more detailed action plans and on which decisions were deferred to the next meeting (pending further information), and
- those which were rejected.

The UBiB staff tried, wherever possible, to visit as many applicants as possible prior to Grants Committee meetings in order to give verbal reports and answer questions.

The Panel provided a clear mechanism through which decisions were taken collectively by ENCAMS staff with the relevant knowledge and experience. The presence on the Panel of an individual who was not a member of ENCAMS staff (Maurice Baren) provided an element of independent scrutiny.

The UBiB programme also made regular reports to the Community Fund, as required by their grant conditions. Annual reports, and plans for the coming year, were produced. In addition, an internal evaluation / monitoring exercise of some aspects of the programme was carried out in 2000.

That interim evaluation was carried out internally by ENCAMS and examined:

- The methods of outreach to community groups, and which methods had been most effective
- Progress to date on projects funded
- Levels of involvement in community projects, and benefits to the wider community
- Which of the messages on sustainable lifestyles had most impact, and which the least.

The interim evaluation was based on a postal questionnaire (designed by ENCAMS) sent to all 139 groups which had received a grant by the end of March 2000. A total of 97 questionnaires were returned, an excellent response rate of 70%. Groups were encouraged to respond by running a prize draw from returned questionnaires, with prizes of £100 to the winner, and £50 each to two runners up. A full report of the evaluation was produced, and submitted to the Community Fund. This study produced some useful statistics and analyses, some of which have been drawn on in this final, independent, evaluation of the programme.

The range of accountability mechanisms within the programme - carefully structured and reported grant-making processes, regular reports, an interim monitoring and a final independent evaluation - suggest that those running the programme took their accountability responsibilities seriously, both for the public money they have received and to the groups they were resourcing. Sufficient investment has been made in monitoring and reporting procedures to ensure adequate information was available to enable independent verification in this study and any others that may be required.

It had been hoped to extend the mechanisms for feedback from urban groups (through the Britain in Bloom regional committees), and to investigate wider attitude changes to sustainability (through public attitude and opinion surveys on sustainable lifestyles), but these plans had not been realised. However, it may be worth considering future research to test some of these implications in future.

3.6 Linkages and networks

As the UBiB programme was essentially designed to increase the profile of BiB among currently excluded groups, and encourage them to develop projects and enter BiB through the provision of grant aid and support, it was originally planned to develop strong linkages between UBiB and the main BiB programme. The national co-ordinator of BiB and a member of the Yorkshire in Bloom committee were on the UBiB Grants Panel, assessing applications for funding, and there were initially plans to encourage some individuals from UBiB groups to join BiB regional committees.

In practice these linkages were minimal. The UBiB staff were under great pressure as a result of the quantity of applications, and there were no real opportunities for them to integrate their work with other ENCAMS programmes, even with BiB. This resulted in UBiB operating relatively independently, with the main linkages being developed between the two regional staff and the national UBiB co-ordinator (primarily to cope with the management of the programme), rather than to other ENCAMS activities.

The main BiB programme did create a new category for their awards, to include community groups, which does allow different types of groups to participate, and four UBiB groups did become national finalists in the main BiB programme in 2001:

- Balsall Heath
- Pimlico Village Housing Co-op
- Bettws, Newport, Gwent
- Pitlochrie, Perthshire (which went on to be national winner in its category).

It may be worth undertaking further research within BiB to assess the implications of the lessons from UBiB following this evaluation, both in terms of the types of groups and projects getting involved in BiB since the launch of UBiB, and in terms of any structural and system changes in BiB which could further support the involvement of excluded groups.

Some linkages did develop between UBiB and ENCAMS Sustainable Communities Programme (SCP), with some local groups being involved in both. This has tended to rely on the initiative and willingness of the local SCP officers, and UBiB staff. For example, the SCP officer in Renfrewshire supported 14 successful UBiB applications from that area. Beyond these specific achievements, linkages have tended to be ad hoc (although no less valuable for that).

There would seem to be clear common interests between UBiB groups and the groups involved in the SCP, and the potential for shared learning has been identified, possibly through the establishment of joint learning networks. This issue is dealt with in more detail below (see section 7. Learning and Change).

This study did investigate the extent of the existing linkages and networks for UBiB groups. Of those who answered this question, the vast majority (11) were linked to other groups and only 1 was not. The benefits of these types of links were expressed as follows:

- "enhanced our reputation"
- "joined up with PlayLink and gave talks to residents groups; useful for involving others"
- "a community group ... came to see what we'd done to get ideas; also other tenants groups most useful: friendship and a sense of community"
- "useful meeting people from the flats; great interaction - stayed in touch".

The extent and nature of these links suggests that groups recognise the value of informal links and networks, both in terms of creating a sense of mutual endeavour and personal support, and in terms of learning from the experience of others. The motivation to look beyond the immediate group and seek support and inspiration from elsewhere clearly exists, but needs to be nurtured and encouraged through the establishment of appropriate systems.

4. Projects undertaken

4.1 Types of projects

A brief analysis has been undertaken for this study of the projects which were funded through UBiB, according to categories which were developed from the ways the projects were described in the summary information supplied by ENCAMS. This analysis showed:

- The vast majority of projects, about 182 of the 363 projects funded, focused on planting bulbs, flowers etc in window boxes, tubs, hanging baskets and other containers to brighten up drab urban environments.
- 106 projects involved creating or restoring community gardens, communal gardens and green spaces, sometimes with wildlife as well as amenity interest and sometimes on previously derelict land.
- About 23 projects could be described as 'landscaping' schemes, such as planting around community buildings, hard landscaping etc.
- About 17 projects specifically mentioned removing or disguising eyesores, again primarily through planting.
- 14 groups were funded to enable them to buy gardening tools, including setting up communal tool loan schemes for individual local gardeners and gardening groups.
- The remaining 21 projects included
 - 6 projects to increase gardening skills through training and workshops
 - 6 allotment, nursery and tree nursery projects to grow plants which could then be planted out more widely around the area
 - 3 wildlife conservation projects (although others had wildlife elements)
 - 2 tree-planting projects (although other projects also planted trees)
 - 2 projects specifically for people with disabilities
 - 1 food growing project, and
 - 1 project using gardening as therapy.

The boundaries of these categories are far from rigid, but the analysis does give a relatively accurate picture of the proportions of the different types of projects which were funded through UBiB.

There are two implications which can be drawn from this data.

- First, it appears that the groups which have participated have thoroughly understood the classic Britain in Bloom approach to environmental improvement, although this was not actually specified in the literature for the UBiB programme: the BiB approach is to focus on colourful planting to create immediate improvements to the urban landscape either through splashes of colour (tubs, hanging baskets etc), or through community gardens to provide amenities as well as environmental improvements.
- Second, it may be that these are actually the schemes which are the top priority to these groups, and that there is an enormous demand for support for this type of immediate, traditional, environmental improvement project in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Our conclusion, at present, is that it is probably a mixture of both of these things. However, this may also be an area where further research would be useful.

The aim of the UBiB programme was to make these types of projects more widespread in disadvantaged urban areas. It is clear from an analysis of the summary project descriptions, and the sample of full materials from projects submitted to this evaluation, that many of the UBiB grants have gone to projects in some very run-down inner city areas.

4.2 Role of UBiB

It had been hoped that involvement in the UBiB programme would encourage the groups undertaking these projects to join in the mainstream Britain in Bloom programme as a result. Although four UBiB projects went on to become national BiB finalists, the broader picture in BiB is not something which could be examined fully within the timescale of this evaluation. However, given the lack of resources experienced by many of the groups applying to UBiB, there must be serious questioning as to whether the excellent achievements of the UBiB programme could be repeated without grant aid, both nationally (in terms of developing support systems) and to the local groups (in providing small grants etc).

This was an issue which was examined in some detail in this study. It was found that over half those interviewed said they would not have done the project they did without the grant (8), and a further quarter said they could not have done the project in the same way (4). Thus, it seems that around 75% of projects relied on UBiB funding for their success. Only 3 groups said they would have done it

anyway, and most of these had funding from elsewhere (eg SRB funding). The availability of funding from elsewhere was also checked: 8 groups had received funding from elsewhere; and 7 had not.

4.3 Sustainability issues

Another stated aim of the UBiB programme was to promote sustainable lifestyles in inner city areas, particularly in recycling or reusing materials, composting green waste, water efficiency and organic gardening. The interim evaluation 2000 found that:

- 30% were composting
- 28% were reusing materials
- 21% were recycling (or using recycled materials)
- 22% were using organic gardening methods, and
- 6% were taking measures to save water.

These figures are echoed in the findings from this study, which found that about half of groups had composted, over a third had recycled or reused materials, but less than a fifth had reduced water use or used organic growing methods. About one fifth said they had done none of these things.

These findings suggests that, although a great many planting projects had taken place, the sustainability aspects were a far lower priority with the groups than immediate visual improvement. It also suggests that much greater effort will be needed to promote sustainability messages if groups are to change the ways in which they approach these types of projects.

5. Who was involved?

As already noted, the target audiences for the UBiB programme were people in urban and inner areas, particularly those who were over 50 years of age, were from black and minority ethnic communities and/or could be described as being disadvantaged in some way. This section outlines the geographical spread of groups/projects, and some of the characteristics of the groups, in relation to target and actual audiences.

5.1 Geographical distribution

The geographical spread of the 363 groups which received support from UBiB was extremely diverse, as can be see from the summary below (England unless otherwise stated):

- London 45 projects
- Birmingham 14 projects
- Renfrew/Paisley, Scotland 14 projects
- Manchester 12
- Glasgow, Scotland 11
- Newcastle upon Tyne 9
- Ballymoney, N Ireland 8
- Bristol 6
- Liverpool 6
- Brighton 5

Four projects each were funded in Sheffield, Leeds, Rhondda Valley Wales, Newport Wales, Carrickfergus N Ireland and Fermanagh, N Ireland.

Three projects each were funded in Belfast, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Cumbernauld, Leicester, Middlesbrough, Workington, and Preston. The remaining locations were very widely spread, with applications in ones and twos even from relatively large urban areas such as Nottingham (2), Dudley (2), Wolverhampton (2), Southampton (1), Oldham (1), Bradford (1), Dundee (1), Coventry (1). Other groups located in less 'urban' areas also received some support if they were assessed by ENCAMS to be serving disadvantaged groups which were likely to be excluded from the main Britain in Bloom scheme.

In broader regional and national terms, the spread can be expressed roughly as:

- North of England 46 projects
- London 45 projects
- Midlands 24

- Scotland 21
- Northern Ireland 19
- South of England 12
- Wales 8

The very wide spread of supported groups could be seen as a major achievement, as the programme clearly reached many towns which can miss out on grants aimed at inner city / urban groups.

5.2 Target and actual audiences

The target audience, as specified in UBiB's initial aims, were disadvantaged sectors of the community, especially in urban and inner city areas, with a particular emphasis on black and minority ethnic communities and people aged over 50. Overall, there are no detailed figures available on who exactly was in the groups receiving grant aid and we cannot therefore assess the extent to which the target groups were reached and supported through the UBiB programme.

The annual progress reports from UBiB to the Community Fund for Years 1 and 2 described the numbers of people who benefited from UBiB as follows:

- Year 1: 130,000 people overall benefited from the UBiB programme including 65,000 elderly people, 70,000 people on low incomes and 120,000 people living in urban areas.
- Year 2: 2,475,000 people overall benefited from the UBiB programme including 745,000 elderly people, 2,100,000 people on low incomes and 2,475,000 people living in urban areas.

In discussions with staff about the sources of these figures, it is clear that these are very broad estimates only developed from:

- extrapolating from figures from the interim evaluation (in 2000) of active participants and beneficiaries in each group receiving support, averaging those figures out and then multiplying by the overall numbers of grants made; these were overall figures estimated by the groups themselves and not categorised (ie no assessment of how many black and minority ethnic people benefited specifically).
- the personal experience of UBiB staff of the groups who had received support, which provided a 'sense' of the numbers and types of people involved and benefiting.

Although there is no reason to question these figures as reasonable estimates, there is equally no real evidence to support them. Certainly, it is useful for programmes which aim to reach excluded groups (in whatever ways that is defined in the particular programme) to gather information about the groups they do work with so that they can provide evidence about the extent to which they have succeeded in order to guide and improve future practice. Some simple monitoring questions attached to the application form could provide the necessary data. Such an approach would have two benefits: it would strengthen the message of the programme that they want to reach those specific groups, which would at the very least encourage potential applicants to consider whether they may need to make additional efforts to reach other parts of their communities, and it would provide valuable data for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Unfortunately, this data is not available for UBiB.

However, we did ask the small sample of groups interviewed for this study about who was involved in their group and/or project. The findings were:

- In terms of the types of people involved:
 - Nine groups said they involved disadvantaged groups, in which category they included people with learning disabilities, single parents, people who were unemployed and/or on low incomes, and women
 - Six groups said they had involved people over 50
 - Three said they had involved people from black and minority ethnic groups
 - Two said they have involved all three of the target audiences
 - One said they had involved none of them.

Given that the categories used could be used to count the same person several times (ie an unemployed black single parent), these figures are less than expected given the locations of the projects. However, this is likely to be as much an issue of lack of shared understanding of terms (such as 'disadvantaged') as of the actual make up of the groups. This is not a problem confined to the UBiB programme, and it may be worth considering new ways of describing target audiences so that the terms make equal sense to community groups as to those analysing programmes.

- In terms of whether the project had brought new people into the group and, if so, who those new people were, the findings were:
 - Nine groups said new people had been brought in as a result, including older people living alone, older people generally, residents, single parents and young mums, different ages and some young people.
 - Six groups said there had been no new people as a result of the UBiB project.
- In terms of whether the group had been set up specially for the project, or had been running for some time, the findings from the 15 responses received were that:
 - 11 said their groups already existed, for periods ranging from two to seven years, and
 - four said their groups were set up specially to do the project (four out of 15 is 26.5%).

This suggests that the vast majority of projects were done by reaching existing groups and offering them resources to do something different. This broadly echoes the findings in the interim evaluation (2000) which were that 84% of those who responded said they had already planned their projects before they heard about UBiB, and 16% had not.

If these figures were extended to the whole range of UBiB groups and projects, it suggests that the UBiB programme can take direct credit for the setting up of 96 groups (26.5%) and 58 projects (16%). However, the disparity between these figures, given that it would be expected that more projects would have resulted than new groups, suggests that these figures should not be relied upon. However, it certainly can be asserted that the programme contributed to the establishment of some new groups, and certainly to stimulating over 50 projects in inner city areas which would otherwise probably not have happened, as well as supporting many others.

- In terms of the extent to which groups were also already involved in other community activities, the findings were that:
 - the vast majority (13) were
 - only 1 was not.

The types of activities they were involved in included:

- women's project / group (2)
- school / after school clubs (2)
- regeneration project (2)
- tenants / residents associations (2)
- employment and resource centre and learning resource centre
- city farm
- anti-litter campaign
- recycling
- town twinning
- New Deal (employment and training)
- outings for the elderly
- sustainable communities project (another ENCAMS initiative)
- drop in centre
- clearing streets to have environmentally friendly area
- ponds for people
- community house - IT class.

As will be seen from the above, more of the groups have a social and economic focus for their activities than an environmental focus, although there are certainly some environmental activities.

- In terms of the size of the groups, the findings were that:
 - about half the groups who replied fell into the range of having between 11 - 20 people involved
 - about a quarter had 6 - 10 people
 - about a quarter had less than five
 - only one group had over 20: these were housing association staff who were, nonetheless, giving their time voluntarily, at weekends, to the project.

This means that, albeit in this small sample, about half the groups had less than 10 people involved and almost none had more than 20. This has implications for considerations of the role of community groups in representing whole communities, as such small groups may not,

in fact, be representative at all. It also has implications for the amount of practical and organisational work that community groups can be expected to do. Small groups can achieve great things, but there are also limits to their time and resources.

5.3 Motivations for involvement

We decided to investigate the motivations of groups in choosing and doing their particular projects. The groups gave a wide range of responses, including:

- "We wanted to enhance our environment"
- "Getting lots of volunteers and wanted to involve them. area very urban and important to have informal green space"
- "Lived in the area since a child. Remember the seats as a meeting place for the community. Needed clearing."
- "When New Deal for Communities came out with funding we were thinking about how we could clean up the area and decorate the spaces. Groundwork helped us look at spaces including closing the alleyways. And it snowballed."
- "Sick of the area being so drab; keen to get residents interested in their environment"
- "Sick of seeing the mess on the estate"
- "To make the neighbourhood pleasanter"
- "Trying to regenerate area and people's views of it"
- "The environment - dirty streets, rubbish, rats"
- "Community members wanted to improve the estate"
- "To improve the area"
- Our area "feels like a forgotten village - neglected looking ... wanted to brighten [it] up ... keen gardeners"
- "Opportunity to involve local people to use the farm's facilities"
- "Made sense because there are some households with gardens but campaigning alone not enough - need to provide facilities".

These responses suggest that the motivations were split fairly evenly between community aspects and environmental aspects, and that these very often overlap. They also suggest that new Government thinking about a 'Liveability' agenda is rooted in the people's experience: according to these findings, environmental concern in communities is essentially about quality of life in local streets and neighbourhoods, and it is here that they feel they can work with their neighbours to make a difference.

6. Achievements and caveats

The achievements of the programme are described throughout this report, but they can be summarised as:

- 3,075 information packs distributed, which achieved:
 - Promotion of messages about the importance of the quality of the urban environment, and that local community activities can make a real contribution to improving it
 - Promotion of messages about undertaking environmental activities in a sustainable manner (ie just because it is an environmental activity does not mean it is necessarily sustainable)
 - Promotion of Britain in Bloom and other ENCAMS initiatives which local urban groups could get involved in.

These messages were disseminated to local groups and also to local authorities and other important local and regional organisations.

- 363 local groups were helped to achieve their projects through the provision of grant aid and links to other support; at least 50 of these projects probably would not have happened without UBiB support.
- UBiB was a well-run, accountable, initiative which set out to interest a new constituency (urban and inner city groups) in Britain in Bloom type activities, and largely succeeded.

Both the interim and final evaluation studies asked groups for their views on the achievements of the programme. The interim evaluation asked respondents for their overall views of the programme (in 2000) by seeking responses to six specific questions. The findings were:

- 98% agreed that receiving the grant had created enthusiasm within members of the group: 89% agreed strongly with this statement, and a further 9% agreed slightly.
- 98% agreed that the grant had enabled them to significantly enhance the area: 90% agreed strongly, and a further 8% agreed slightly.
- 93% agreed that the grant helped them to create pride in their area and would help local people to maintain the improved environment: 81% agreed strongly and 12% agreed slightly.
- 92% agreed that carrying out the work had created enthusiasm and/or interest from people outside the group; 70% agreed strongly and 22% agreed slightly.
- 85% agreed the work carried out had prompted future work to improve their area: 60% agreed strongly and 25% agreed slightly.
- 52% agreed that the grant encouraged other groups of people nearby to carry out similar work: 29% agreed strongly and 23% agreed slightly. 42% did not know whether this had happened or not.

We have since examined some additional aspects of the programmes achievements, using the criteria established by the programme itself. The results were as follows:

- 14 groups (out of 17) said their project had contributed to improving the environment in the area (about 82%); only one said it had not.
- 7 groups said the project had made the area feel safer (41%); 8 said it had not. Where they felt the project had made the area feel safer, the comments were:
 - "yes, because people became more ... alert to trouble"
 - "yes, because less run down so less inclined to vandalism"
 - "proves you can leave stuff outside like picnic tables; no-one vandalised or stole them"
 - "possibly, as it made it look more cared for"
- 12 groups had gone on to other community projects (about 70%). 3 of these said they were always doing new projects. Projects mentioned as following on included:
 - "applying for funding to do welfare work - but applying anyway"
 - "lots of events eg compost toilet, organic produce increased"
 - "next year we plan to take over some land that's not being used, landscape it, seats, play area and nice area for elderly: community garden"
 - "started up a library; taken children camping; recycling furniture"
 - "more landscaping of area [to make a] park"
 - "looking at possibility of small sports centre"
 - "recycling projects; computer courses; change a play area to a sports ground"
 - "looking at getting a Green Spaces officer", employed by the council to encourage communities on estates to get involved
 - "involved in community house"
 - "one member acting as 'composting doctor' giving advice via enquiry line and in newsletter".

We also asked the groups what they felt were the main achievements of the UBiB programme - in terms of environmental improvement, community involvement, and anything else they wanted to mention. Their views were as follows:

- "Publicity for our service"
- "Environment and community aspects equally important; [the pond is the] centrepiece for the project and brings in more people; environmentally, we re-establish native plants"
- "Environmentally - cleaner and pleasant; community involvement - hugely important to involve the elderly who have lots of knowledge; feeling of community especially people who live on their own; got a great sense of achievement and pride; also older people working with

younger people; most important was to make better use of our area - and that we did it ourselves"

- "Re-use of waste ground. Enjoying it. Everyone involved including children and elderly. Good mix. Proud of what we achieved."
- "Pride in area. Some people who might not [otherwise] have got involved"
- "Environmentally, improved the look of the flats"
- "Environmentally, the area is really improved - no graffiti"; and "made people become more aware"
- "Environmentally, every spring is brilliant"; and "making people realise we can make a difference"
- "Environmentally, getting young people aware that they live in a green environment - educational; community involvement, having a say - can alter the environment"
- "Environmentally, planting the trees; community involvement - 3,500 bulbs"
- "The nursery itself ... plant growing; involving children who learned a lot and they loved it"
- "Getting colour around the place and recycling plastic; establishing links between the [city] farm and local community"
- "Seeing people who hadn't used a saw before and didn't have confidence even to hit a nail with a hammer - and feel really chuffed when they end up creating a finished window box"
- "Reduction of household waste through composting. Flowers improved the look of the place. Improved sense of belonging and feeling of doing one's bit for the environment".

We also asked groups whether there were things they had wanted to do but had not been able to. 7 groups said there were, and 7 said not. Of those who said yes, the comments made included:

- "things for birds and bulbs and herbs inside"
- "limited by funds"
- "more landscaping"
- "more flowers; more education about gardening"
- "need labour more than money"
- "more money"
- "follow up; having it more ongoing; building on it and encouraging an approach to healthy living"
- "gardening training and more guidance especially on low maintenance"
- "someone to give advice before started".

Overall, the groups interviewed in the follow up study said they felt the best aspects of the UBiB programme were as follows:

- "Putting lovely plants in common areas inside and out - made it more attractive"
- "Completing it!"
- "Worthwhile - worth all the hard work to walk out now and see our achievements. Community sense of achievement. People are still interested - still tending it."
- "Getting together with others - working together"
- "See the finished project. Sense of achievement."
- "People who were initially opposed came round and got involved very enthusiastically"
- "Response from our staff was excellent"
- "Achieving the award and being part of it"
- "When everything is blooming you feel your work has been worthwhile"
- "The money!"
- "Grant gave us the ability to do what we wanted to do - to plant trees and bulbs - colourful display"
- "Made good friends. Got to know the community I live in - that would not have happened"
- "Improving the local environment with flowers and colour"
- "Money well spent in my opinion. I would like to know how to improve other parts of our community eg schools which are very dull".

It is very difficult to establish what the long term achievements of the UBiB programme may be, as some of the projects are still being completed. It may be worth considering revisiting some of the groups in three or four years time to find out whether there is any lasting legacy from the programme - such as long term environmental improvements or other activities which drew on the earlier experience.

Overall, however, it is clear that the UBiB programme was valued by local groups who found they could access funding for their projects. There were also some specific problems in the design and management of the programme:

- Activity, relationships, staff confidence and organisational understanding of the issues were really only just beginning to develop by the end of Year 2 and beginning of Year 3 of the programme. At this stage, arrangements were having to be made to wind down the programme, as the funding was limited to three years.

Three years funding for a project which involves making contact with, and providing support for, community-level activity is not sufficient. Three years funding means, in practice, one year to start up (get staff, establish systems, publicise programme etc), one year of operation and one year to close down (during which time staff often lose motivation as they have to seek other work). Community support schemes, such as UBiB, really need a minimum of five years funding.

- Successes came most often when working with established groups which could start quickly. These groups may survive in spite of short term support from programmes such as UBiB but other newer and less established groups are much less likely to survive. This has implications beyond the failure of a particular group as it may undermine the confidence of those who have got engaged for the first time in something like this, but may be put off from other community activities as a result of no further support being available from a known source.
- The expectation from ENCAMS was that UBiB was a simple grant scheme which only needed 'administration'. As a result, the project management role was initially not fully developed, although the national project co-ordinator did take on this role as the project progressed. One consequence of the initial approach was lack of clarity for front-line staff (ie those dealing directly with groups), including over criteria for grants. This can cause serious problems as it can undermine relationships between staff and the groups they are supporting because it can reduce credibility and trust.
- The project was quite independent of ENCAMS and its overall organisational priorities and working methods, at regional and national levels. Although there were some good linkages (eg between UBiB and SCP, especially at later stages), these were less than could have been achieved with more time for pro-active management which strengthened organisational links and support for staff. Even links between UBiB and BiB were minimal, which reduced opportunities for BiB to use lessons (and contacts) from UBiB. Although BiB did create a new category for community groups, overall practice in BiB does not appear to have developed in ways which make it easier for disadvantaged groups to participate.

In summary, it is clear that some excellent and innovative work was supported through the UBiB programme, much of which would probably not have happened if the programme had not existed. The problems identified above, however, suggest that the programme could have achieved considerably more in terms of long term contributions to sustainable community development in some very disadvantaged areas if these specific issues had been addressed, particularly:

- a longer timescale for the programme (five years minimum)
- administration and management systems appropriate to the demands from large numbers of groups with particular needs
- adequate staff resources to provide appropriate support to groups at the times they most needed it.

7. Learning and change

This evaluation was intended to focus particularly on examining the learning opportunities within the UBiB programme, the implications of these activities and the potential for developing joint learning networks with the Sustainable Communities Project. This section describes the plans within the UBiB programme for workshops for groups, the main lessons groups identified by local groups from their experience, the impacts of those lessons in encouraging changes in attitudes and behaviour, and the levels of interest in new learning networks.

7.1 UBiB workshops

The UBiB programme originally had ambitious plans for regional and local community workshops to provide opportunities for groups to gain access to further information and advice: one in each nation /

region = 17. However, this workshop programme was not fully realised due to lack of interest from groups.

In practice:

- Some workshops were held but were poorly attended (in Brighton on 12 June 2001, Stockton on 31 August and Paisley on 16 October)
- The workshop in Newcastle on 7 July was better attended.
- Three workshops were cancelled due to poor responses to invitations (Birmingham, Nottingham and Halifax).
- A London workshop has been planned for later in 2002.

As can be seen from the above, only four of the planned 17 workshops had been held by the time of this evaluation, and one further workshop was still in the planning stages.

The workshops were intended to fulfil two main purposes:

- To provide information and advice on future funding. This had two elements:
 - To provide specially tailored information for groups on funds available in their local areas. This involved synthesising information from the DETR's guide to funding, the Shell Better Britain InterActive newsletter and other sources
 - To help groups think through how their priorities matched the availability of funds, to try to help them make small amendments to their plans to increase their chances of being eligible for available funds.
- To begin to build regional networks of support which groups could use when the UBiB programme finished.

Although all groups which received UBiB grants were invited to workshops, apparently only a few of them saw the relevance of the events to their own interests. Interviews with staff and groups suggest that this could be explained by reference to two factors:

- First, it is common experience among organisations that it is extremely difficult to gain good attendances at training / learning events for community groups. Travel costs, limited time for activists to do anything beyond the bare minimum to make a project work, a predominantly very local focus and a lack of expectation that the event will be worthwhile: all these factors militate against groups attending external events. Of these, the biggest single problem for people involved in community groups is simply finding the time.
- Second, where training / learning events for community groups have been run successfully, it is usually either because the organisation running the events has a long term relationship with the groups, and there is considerable mutual knowledge and trust, or the event is responding directly to needs expressed by groups, or both.

For UBiB, there was no longstanding relationship between the organisation and local groups: this was impossible due to lack of UBiB staff time and minimal links to other organisations which already had these relationships (where these existed). In those places where UBiB did have these links to other organisations with officers on the ground (eg in Renfrewshire and in London through the Peabody Trust), relationships with groups were much stronger.

7.2 Lessons from involvement

We asked groups what they felt had been the main lessons from their involvement with projects. Their view was that the lessons had included:

- "Doing PR for projects like this is very good for projects like ours"
- "Other community groups can do it easily"
- "It needs input from the council"
- "Important to think clearly about what you want ... Get help with application forms from Groundwork ... Important to make some money"
- "Important to make sure you co-ordinate with everyone at the same time ... get the right equipment"
- "Communication is very important"

- "We need to think about how to get through barriers of apathy ... change negative attitude"
- "Don't be afraid to put ideas on paper"
- "Small things make a big impact ... More resources could make a phenomenal impact in this area"
- "Essential to involve people in an active way to do something different"
- "That you can engage people in environmental issues even in very depressed areas, but need to persevere ... we want to solidify the relationships the project has with environmental and community groups"
- "Flowers cheer people up"
- "Don't put out things that will be stolen or vandalised"
- "Never underestimate people's commitment to the environment".

A number of implications can be drawn from these responses:

- Groups are aware of some of the lessons which they are learning, and are using them to improve future work.
- Lessons are about both what they have done and how they have done it: process and product lessons.
- Thinking about lessons can be a productive and positive exercise, achieved by encouraging people to reflect on and draw out important issues from what they have done. It does not have to be negative, critical or dull.

7.3 Learning to change

We asked groups whether their involvement in their project, and the UBiB programme, had made any difference to the way they and other members of their group think and act (eg about environmental issues, or about community action, or about changes to personal lifestyle to be more sustainable). Their views were:

- "Has made us feel differently about our local environment - it feels possible to improve it ... Develops people's aesthetic ... Personally, I am going to put plants in my own garden"
- "Educational aspect to environmental projects"
- "Appreciate environment more ... See that its possible to be involved together"
- "Lots of people were pessimistic about the durability of the plants and boxes"
- "We now take care of this thing we have built ... We appreciate our environment more ... Tend plants ... More aware of environmental issues"
- "We have to rethink community action - must be from grassroots not top down"
- "More recycling ... more aware of sustainability"
- "Not yet - it will come"
- "Adds another dimension to what we're doing ie include recycling"
- "Through our activities and success it has kept morale high"
- "Core people are very aware of the environment. However a few people who are helping are now more aware of the environment ... Community action - hard to involve more than a few".

7.4 Learning networks

About 50% of those interviewed said they would be interested in joining a learning network, for reasons including:

- "Thinking about spreading the idea ... Learning more about plants"
- "Strengthen bonds and organise school visits ... ideas to aid us with teaching materials and networking information"
- "Learn from each other ... Pass on resources"
- "Seminars of when / how / what to plant especially if it was specialised to urban [areas] ... our issues are separate and different"
- "Exchange of information and ideas and contacts"
- "Interested in a learning network to exchange ideas"
- "Feel part of a movement" ie part of something bigger
- Exchange information and experience.

5 of those interviewed said they were not interested in a learning network, two said possibly and one was not sure. The only reason given for not joining a network was "time is a problem".

It is worth noting that most of the groups interviewed were already linked with a whole range of other community groups, and were engaged in a whole range of other activities (see above). Any proposals for learning networks in future would need to take into account the existing networks that groups have, and build on - rather than compete with - those existing networks.

Any future development of learning networks needs to take all the factors outlined above into account. If learning networks are considered a priority, a development process may need to be designed covering further discussions with groups to establish exactly what sorts of gaps they see in opportunities to exchange information and experience, and how best they could see those gaps being filled. This information can then be brought into an analysis, preferably through dialogue with groups, about what the organisation sponsoring the learning networks wishes to achieve (eg promoting sustainability, or encouraging environmental improvements).

Learning networks could then provide a valuable balance between supporting and strengthening community organisations, and disseminating vital information about environmental issues and sustainability. These are not conflicting approaches: access to expert advice on environmental issues is one of the needs already expressed by groups in this study.

7.5 Organisational learning

Although it is outside the specified scope of this evaluation, there are also lessons for UBiB's sponsoring organisation: Tidy Britain Group / Going for Green which became Environmental Campaigns (ENCAMS) during the course of the study. These lessons can be summarised as follows:

- Disadvantaged groups in run down urban neighbourhoods often have extremely limited resources which reduces their ability to cover the normal running costs of voluntary community action (phone calls, travel, copying etc). They may also lack experience of running community projects, including dealing with formal institutions (like local authorities) in positive ways.

These circumstances will greatly increase the needs of groups for support if they are to access and make use of external funds. Support requires resources in the sponsoring organisation (or close links with other organisations which can provide that support) and UBiB did not have adequate staff resources to provide such support for local groups. As a result, not only was the potential to build on local enthusiasm reduced, the staff were placed under great pressure to deal with demands from groups, and with the frustration and dissatisfaction from groups when demands could not be met. Future community grant schemes of this sort need to build in adequate resources to ensure that support for local groups is available.

- Staff also need support when they are dealing with demands from disadvantaged groups, and a strong team needs to be developed to provide that support. In UBiB, staff report that they were able to develop a strong and positive mutual support system, and they saw this team dynamic as one of the critical success factors for the programme overall. However, this was apparently in spite of (rather than helped by) the prevailing management ethic and structures in ENCAMS.

The original management structure for UBiB was for each individual member of staff to be located in a different office (unavoidable given they were covering different parts of the country), and with vertical reporting and line management arrangements. This proved inappropriate in this programme, and is likely to be inappropriate in any future community grant and support programme of this sort. These programmes need to enable staff to know how other members of staff are handling particular problems, share experience and good practice, and simply provide personal support as a result of working on the same programme.

The conventional vertical management hierarchy may be appropriate when existing staff simply take on additional responsibilities for a short time, but not when staff are recruited specifically for a short term programme and will not remain with the organisation in the long term. The management structures for future programmes may thus need to be redesigned to tackle these problems.

- It is clear from grant application documentation that it was not expected that the UBiB programme would require any more than basic administration to run it. When it became

apparent that it needed a lot more proactive management, creative thinking and commitment, those roles were taken on by staff.

Any future programme with similar aims does need to recognise that there is no such thing as a simple grant system for community-based activities, unless it is merely an additional element to an existing infrastructure of support. The necessary resources, for the necessary skilled personnel, need to be built into any future schemes.

- There seemed to be no clear mechanisms to allow organisational learning to emerge during the programme. However, the establishment of linked evaluations of UBiB and the Sustainable Communities Programme, and the potential to develop proposals for external learning networks in future, does provide an opportunity for organisational lessons to be articulated and shared. ENCAMS may wish to consider creating additional opportunities internally to discuss the organisational lessons emerging, and their implications for future programmes.

8. Summary and conclusions

The key task in any evaluation is to assess the extent to which activities and achievements have met the objectives of the programme being evaluated. The objectives of UBiB are expressed in slightly different terms in different documents. However, the overall three objectives can be summarised as follows:

- To make available (to successful applicants) easy-to-access small grants and other support in order to support planting schemes in areas which had not been involved in the main Britain in Bloom initiative
- To encourage these groups to move on from initial small-scale planting schemes to wider environmental improvement activities, and
- For participants to adopt environmentally sustainable techniques in their planting schemes and, potentially, more widely.

The extent to which the UBiB programme met these objectives was variable, as the summary below shows:

- A grant scheme was established which was easy to access: according to feedback from groups less than 1% felt the application form was not easy to use; and less than 3% were confused by the procedure. Grants were made to groups in disadvantaged urban areas of the UK which had been traditional under-represented in BiB awards. Projects were undertaken which almost certainly would not have been done without UBiB funding: up to 75% of projects relied on UBiB funding for their success. And the vast majority of projects were planting schemes.

However, the success in providing support was less marked, primarily because of lack of sufficient staff resources: initially a project co-ordinator and two half-time officers were dealing with over 600 applicant groups. The staff tried hard to provide support to groups, many of which clearly needed and wanted support, but were frustrated by lack of time.

- The UBiB programme itself was too short, and there has not been sufficient time passed to test developments since, to assess fully whether groups had moved on to wider environmental improvement activities.

About 70% of the interview sample for this study had gone on to do other community projects. However, initial feedback from groups and staff suggests that well-established groups, which existed prior to receiving UBiB funding, are more likely to move on to other activities. Around 75% of groups applying to UBiB already existed. Newer, less well-established groups are unlikely to have received sufficient development support through UBiB to enable them to become strong enough to move on to other activities. However, it may be worth revisiting those groups interviewed for this evaluation in a year or so to test these conclusions further.

- There is little evidence that the UBiB programme had encouraged groups to adopt sustainable methods. On the sustainability measures identified for the programme, between a third and half had composted, about a third had recycled or used recycled materials, but

only about a fifth (or less) had used organic growing methods, and even less took measures to reduce water use. Findings for this study suggest that about 20% of respondents had done none of these things.

Even taking the best view of these figures, between 50 -70% did not compost, about 70% did no recycling, and even more had done nothing about introducing organic growing methods or saving water. Moreover, there is no evidence that the UBiB programme had influenced behaviour, even for those who had adopted these methods.

When asked what difference the programme had made to their attitudes and behaviours, respondents which felt it had made a difference pointed to aesthetic improvements to the local environment, and thinking about the local environment, rather than sustainability issues.

These are nonetheless important achievements, and may point to unrealistic expectations about the extent to which a programme with a limited timespan could do more than start a process of learning about sustainability issues.

In addition to the three broad objectives for the UBiB programme, other aims were identified in the Business Plan. These were, in summary (see page 4 for the full list):

- Promotion of BiB to a wider audience especially those in disadvantaged sectors of the community (those in urban and inner city areas were specified), and the 50+ age group.
- Improving the accessibility and standard of BiB entries through better resourcing.
- Promoting a sustainable gardening message to BiB participants.
- Encouraging volunteering and sharing of skills and information within the community.
- Returning local pride and bringing about local economic regeneration (especially through tourism and attracting new businesses to these areas).

The extent to which UBiB met these objectives was also variable:

- The programme was successful in getting information about UBiB (and thus BiB) out to new audiences, by using local authority (and other) regeneration, and housing association, networks. The drawbacks to this approach in terms of achieving community environmental projects have been described above (section 3.3).
- There is no evidence to suggest any marked change to BiB entries as a result of UBiB. Although four UBiB projects became national finalists in 2001, there is no evidence to suggest that, without UBiB support, such an achievement will be repeated. BiB has created a new category (for community projects) to enable these groups to enter, but other systems and structures remain unchanged and the extent to which community groups from disadvantaged areas will stay involved with BiB, without access to funding, remains unclear.
- UBiB did promote a sustainable gardening message to participants through information in the publicity materials for the programme. However, the efficacy of these messages in changing the ways groups approaches their projects appears very limited (see above).
- There was no overt promotion within UBiB of volunteering, beyond offering support for activities which were about voluntary community activity. There was also little overt promotion of the importance of sharing of skills and information within the community. The workshops run by UBiB to introduce the sharing of skills and information were not successful overall, although some important lessons have emerged as a result. Lack of staff resources meant that this area of activity could not be developed in the ways originally envisaged.
- There was a strong sense of local pride among participants, in doing their projects and achieving something valuable for their neighbourhoods and communities. This may contribute to local economic regeneration although the measures originally envisaged to monitor these effects (eg market research) were never implemented through the UBiB programme.

In summary, it can be seen from this study that the UBiB programme reached a lot of groups, distributed basic information about urban environmental action and how to make community action more sustainable, distributed small grants to local groups in an efficient and accountable manner, and enabled some local groups to achieve some real improvements in some very disadvantaged neighbourhoods - both through physical environmental improvements and through supporting local community action. It is likely that many of these improvements would not have happened without the UBiB programme.

Beyond the assessment of performance against objectives, this evaluation has shown the following:

- Small-scale immediate visual improvements (eg through planting schemes) are well-understood, well-liked and relatively easy to achieve even in very disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Relatively low levels of investment in well-run national schemes, such as UBiB, can have really important impacts on the ground, contributing to local confidence in the potential for things to improve, and to local residents' sense of 'agency' (ie that they can contribute to that positive impact). The lack of a sense of agency is one of the factors that has been identified as a barrier to achieving sustainable communities, and this programme clearly has some lessons for how this can be tackled.

However, the structure and approach of the scheme (especially the lack of overall direction and management, and lack of good links to other organisations with staff on the ground, given UBiB's limited staff resource), meant that the long term achievements of the scheme are likely to be less than they could have been.

- Programmes like UBiB need funding, for an infrastructure of management, and for support as well as small grants for groups. The research showed that only 3 out of 17 groups interviewed would have done the projects without the funding from the programme - a very small proportion. UBiB set up an effective, low cost operation which was nevertheless efficient and accountable, and this suggests that a UK-wide scheme may be a particularly cost-effective mechanism. But none of this would have been possible without specific external funding. Now that funding is at an end, local groups have to look elsewhere for support, and the lessons from the national management of the programme will only be useful if transferred to another programme.
- Timescales are always crucial, in three ways.
 - First, it takes time for information to reach grassroots communities, even in urban areas where communications may be expected to be good. It is in the nature of excluded communities that they are apart from mainstream communication networks, and therefore messages about availability of support will take that much longer to reach these groups.
 - Second, it takes time to set up and run a scheme of this sort. Three years is not sufficient: the first year (at least) is the setting up phase (including recruiting staff, setting up systems and launching initial publicity); in the second year operations begin; and by the third year plans have to start being made for closure. Enthusiasm is lost from groups who have just learned about the scheme as it closes, staff lose motivation as they feel they must start looking for other jobs, and the momentum is lost.
 - Third, it takes time for the impacts of community-level activities of this sort to be fully realised. Further research after a period of years may help to identify long term changes which will not be apparent immediately.
- It is worth establishing criteria for success at the beginning of programmes of this kind, so that achievements can be assessed sensibly. Setting criteria for success is simply an exercise of saying: how will we know if we have been successful; what are the signs of that success? These may change as the programme progresses, but they can provide a useful checklist from the start.

For example, although the programme's primary objective was to reach certain sectors of the community, this was not tackled as effectively as it might have been. There are numerous other organisations which may have been able and willing to distribute information which would have reached these sectors.

In addition, no information was collected on who exactly was in groups, or who their target beneficiaries were. A simple question on the application form could have addressed these issues. This would not only have provided information for future research, but would also have reinforced the message to local groups that the target audiences were a priority for the programme as a whole. The same principle applies to messages about sustainability.

If initial criteria for success had been set to include reaching these specific sectors, and how success in getting sustainability messages across could be assessed, mechanisms could have been put in place at various stages to ensure these specific goals were achieved.

- There is a difference between environmental projects and sustainable projects: an environmental improvement project is not necessarily sustainable, nor does it necessarily contribute to sustainable development.

The UBiB aimed to increase the sustainability of the planting activities of the projects in the programme, by providing guidance in the information pack, but there is little evidence that this had much impact on the activities of groups.

New mechanisms may be needed both to get messages about sustainability across more effectively, and to assess the extent to which these affect attitudes, behaviour and the priorities of local groups.

This evaluation was also intended particularly to examine the learning processes experienced by community groups to "enable those working to enhance local sustainability to better understand the process of bringing about change and to develop their practice accordingly". It was not intended that an in depth analysis should be done, but rather a study that was "concise and directly related to the work". Particular emphasis was therefore placed on examining the learning opportunities within the UBiB programme, the implications of these activities and the potential for developing joint learning networks with the Sustainable Communities Project.

The findings were, in summary:

- The UBiB workshops were not successful overall. Only four of the planned 17 workshops were held; the remainder cancelled or not arranged at all due to poor response or lack of interest. Only one workshop (in Newcastle) was described as 'better attended'.
- The vast majority of groups were already networked, either through links to other local community organisations, local support networks or national networks. The links identified were more often with community networks than with environmental networks.
- Groups interviewed easily identified lessons they felt they had learned from doing projects. Roughly two-thirds of those mentioned lessons about project management, support, links to other. About a third (or slightly less) mentioned lessons about the environment or environmental issues.

However, a larger proportion mentioned environmental issues when asked to identify what difference doing their project had made to their attitudes and behaviour. Involvement in the UBiB projects had clearly had some impact on environmental awareness, but groups found it harder to identify what the environmental lessons were than what they had changed as a result of increasing environmental awareness. This suggests a practical approach to environmental lessons and a more analytical approach to organisational lessons, although more research could very usefully develop these initial conclusions.

- There is some demand for learning networks. About 50% of those interviewed were interested in joining learning networks, with the emphasis on exchanging ideas, information, contacts and experience. However, evidence from this study suggests that formal learning events (like the UBiB workshops) are unlikely to be the most effective approach for disseminating learning or providing support to small community groups who lack the time and other resources to attend one-off sessions.

Long term links between support organisations and local groups, responding to specific learning needs articulated by groups, anticipating needs by monitoring and responding by offering advice quickly on new policy developments, and focusing events on groups with staff, may be more successful.

This study has also identified some clear demands from groups for further help and support especially on funding, technical gardening and environmental advice, information from other projects, and help with publicity.

It is important that the design of any new learning networks does reflect these explicit demands. Too often learning (and training) initiatives focus on the generic issues (eg fundraising and publicity) rather than specific skills and information. Such an approach may involve providing support for individual groups and projects where that is needed. This could be done through surgery sessions or visits to groups by relevant experts, alongside access to online information sharing and various other mechanisms.

These findings suggest that:

- Although the process of bringing about change is slow and requires long term investment, change is happening. Groups report changes in attitudes and behaviour as a result of practice direct experience of planning and implementing projects (see above and section 7.3 for details).

Groups are already motivated to look outside their immediate circumstances for inspiration and support, and that can be built on to help them consolidate their learning and confidence, and a dialogue can be established in those processes to allow environmental expertise, and the potential for projects to contribute to sustainable development, to be explored.

- This suggests a very different approach to practice in learning and training by programmes such as UBiB and organisations like ENCAMS. It is not a matter of running a few courses in the hope of attracting community groups. Not only does such training already exist (eg through the Environmental Trainers Network), but groups are already linked into networks at local level and more widely and can access such resources if they need them.

A much more sophisticated approach is needed to find the links between existing learning opportunities and thus consolidate and strengthen what already exists, and to identify the gaps (in dialogue with community organisations) which may suggest which new initiatives need to be developed.

- In terms of potential links between UBiB and SCP groups, the research suggests that it is only when a relatively longstanding relationship of trust and credibility is established with groups that they will give up time to attend learning and training events. That has not been established with UBiB groups, so there is no obvious foundation to build on. The separate evaluation of the SCP will show the extent of such relationships with those groups. Certainly, mechanisms could be established which do attract local groups, by providing specific training to meet specific expressed needs, and give access to other valued resources.

Overall, therefore, plans for new learning networks need to consider:

- The purpose of the networks - for local groups, for the organisation promoting them, and for the movement towards sustainable communities more widely.
- How the new networks would fit within the existing context of support (mutual and provided by others) for these types of projects, and would complement (rather than compete with) other services and networks.
- What are the costs and benefits, to all participants. Community groups have limited resources, especially time and money, which will affect their ability to take time to participate in initiatives beyond the neighbourhood.
- What are the desirable outputs and outcomes, and criteria for success. That is, for all staff to know what will be the products, what will be the desired results, and how they will know whether they have succeeded.

Finally, to summarise very briefly the overall message of this evaluation study, the UBiB programme has been highly successful in getting funding to many disadvantaged communities in neighbourhoods often excluded from other schemes, especially prestigious mainstream programmes such as Britain in Bloom. This funding allowed community groups to achieve projects which had real benefits for those participating and for their areas. It is hoped that, in identifying those aspects of the programme where more could have been achieved, this study will contribute to the development of further good practice in future programmes.

ANNEX A. Groups identified for interview

Sampling

The following groups were identified for interview using a random sampling technique, and then making adjustments to ensure wider geographical coverage.

Although a sample of 15-20 groups has been considered an appropriate number to provide a small but useful sample of the 363 which have received grants, 23 groups have been identified to allow for some difficulties in making contact with the groups.

The groups identified are listed below, with the grant reference number given in brackets:

- 1 (17) Linthouse Housing Association, Glasgow
- 2 (28) Whitechapel Tenants Association Century Garden, London*
- 3 (34) Community Garden, Telford
- 4 (51) Violet Avenue Tenants and Residents Association, Uxbridge
- 5 (68) Field Lane Community Garden, Rastrick, Halifax
- 6 (85) Johnstone Castle Community Learning Centre Garden Project, Renfrewshire
- 7 (102) Bhai Khanaya House Zen Garden, Birmingham*
- 8 (106) Baskets and Boxes Bonanza 2000, Bristol*
- 9 (119) Townley Environmental Improvements, Beswick, Manchester*
- 10 (136) Kilncroft Gardening Club, Edinburgh*
- 11 (153) Canany Environmental Project, Ballymoney, Northern Ireland*
- 12 (170) Rhyl West Greening Project, Denbighshire
- 13 (187) Community Garden, Rhondda Valley
- 14 (221) Glenvullin Community Garden, Garuagh, Northern Ireland
- 15 (238) Seaton Burn Regeneration, Newcastle upon Tyne*
- 16 (254) Thannington Tool Loan Scheme, Canterbury
- 17 (282) Balsall Heath in Bloom, Birmingham*
- 18 (286) Wildflower Pond Project, Moulsecombe, Brighton*
- 19 (289) Eco-Stannington, Sheffield
- 20 (307) Marsh Farm in Bloom, Luton*
- 21 (328) Kennedy Place Enhancement, Pitlochry*
- 22 (343) Lache Adventure Playground, Chester
- 23 (354) Alvey Gardening Group, Southwark, London*

Those marked * were the ones particular efforts were made to contact.

ANNEX B. Questionnaires used in interviews

Introduction

Two different questionnaires were developed: one for use with UBiB staff, and one for use with project groups. Both are copied below.

Questionnaire for interviews with project groups

Preamble

- We understand that you received a grant from the Urban Britain in Bloom (UBiB) programme for your project
- We are carrying out a short review of the UBiB programme, and have identified a small random sample of groups which received grants
- Would like to do a short interview with you
- Everything will be completely confidential; none of those interviewed will be identified
- We want to examine whether the programme has achieved what it was intended to, and how much it met the needs of the groups involved.

Questions

Your group and project

- What was the project you did (very briefly)?
- Was your group formed specially for this project, or was it already going? If already going, for roughly how long (eg a year, 5 years)?
- Are you involved in other community activities? If so, what sorts of things?
- What motivated you to do this project?
- What sort of area was the project in:
 - inner city
 - housing estate
 - urban
 - suburban
 - country town
 - village
 - other (please describe)
- Who was involved in your project?
 - number of people in your group
 - were any of the groups UBiB wanted to reach involved ie
 - over 50s
 - black and minority ethnic communities
 - disadvantaged groups (eg unemployed, on low incomes etc)
- Did you do any of the following:
 - composting
 - measures to reduce use of water
 - recycling (or reuse) of waste materials
 - use organic growing methods

Support

- Would you have done the project if you had not received the grant from UBiB?
- Did you get any funding from anywhere else? If so, where from?
- Did you get any advice or training for your group for this project? If so, what and where from?
Who gave the most useful advice and support?
- Did you receive any support (or mentoring) through UBiB? If so, what was it and how useful was it?
- Would you have liked more help from UBiB or elsewhere? If so, what?
- Did you make any links to other community groups?
 - in UBiB
 - in other networksIf so, what was the most useful thing you gained from these links?
And have you stayed in touch?

Achievements

- What do you think were the most important achievements of your project?
 - environmentally
 - in terms of getting community involvement
 - anything else
- Did the project contribute to generally improving the environment in your area?
- Did the project help to make the area feel safer?
- Did this project encourage new people to join your group? If so, who?
- Was there anything you wanted to do but couldn't? If so, what, and why not?

After the project

- Have you gone on to do any other community projects? If so, what?
If not, do you plan to?
What sort of things do you plan to do?
- What would you say are the main lessons from the project you did with UBiB funding?
- Have you used those lessons at all (eg in new projects - or telling others about them)?
- Has your involvement in this project made any difference to the way you and other members of your group think and act (eg about environmental issues, or about community action, or about changes to personal lifestyle to be more sustainable)?
- Would you be interested in joining some sort of 'learning network' following on from your involvement in UBiB?
If so, what would you hope to get out of such a network?

Overall

- What would you say was the best aspects of the UBiB programme?
- Was there anything specific you would have liked from the programme that was not available? If so, what?

Questionnaire for interviews with staff

Preamble

- We are carrying out a short review of the UBiB programme, and have identified with Chris de Sa (UBiB national co-ordinator) one or two individuals who have been involved.
- Would like to do a short interview with you
- Everything will be completely confidential; none of those interviewed will be identified
- We want to examine whether the programme has achieved what it was intended to, and how much it met the needs of the groups involved.

Questions

- What was your role in Urban Britain in Bloom? What did that involve on a day to day basis?
- What sort of contact did you have with local group? Was this appropriate? If not, why not?
- In terms of links within ENCAMS, which aspects of internal management support and help available to you worked best on a day to day basis? And which aspects worked least well?
- Any other comments about internal management and staff support within UBiB?
- Do you think UBiB achieved its objectives of local environmental improvement and empowering communities? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Do you think UBiB reached its target groups:
 - urban communities
 - black and minority ethnic groups
 - over 50s
 - disadvantaged groupsIf so, how much? If not, why not?
- Can you describe any learning opportunities within the programme, formal or informal, (eg workshops, access to information about training etc)?
- Can you suggest any other types of learning opportunities that should be provided in this sort of programme?
- Do you think UBiB groups would benefit from joining learning networks (eg with the Sustainable Communities programme)? What do you think groups would gain?
- Overall, which aspects of the UBiB programme worked best?
- Which aspects of the UBiB programme worked least well?
- Were there any elements which could have been added to the programme which you think would have improved it?

- What lessons do you think need to be learned by the main programme staff of ENCAMS about running a programme of this sort?
- Are there any other points you would like to make about the UBiB programme, or lessons from your involvement in it?

ANNEX C. Full list of UBiB grant recipients

The following list covers all the UBiB grant recipients, in number order as they were categorised by the scheme.

Bettws in Bloom (Newport)
Maesglas Improvement Association (Newport)
Humberstone Village Community Association (Leicestershire)
Lyng Community (Birmingham)
Calthorpe Project (London)
Ewanrigg & Netherton Tenants Association (Maryport)
Monton Village Community Association (Manchester)
North Shields Triangle Association (Northumberland)
Starbeck in Bloom (Harrogate)
Ryecroft/Coalpool Local Committee (Walsall)
Clapton Community Housing Trust (London)
South Derbyshire Mental Health Association (Swadlincote)
Vensall Tenants Association (Liverpool)
Ipsden Tenants Association (London)
Congleton in Bloom (Cheshire)
The Maple Project (Millenium Wildlife Garden, Penge)
The Meadow Well Community Resource Centre (Northumberland)
South Bank Community Forum (Middlesbrough)
Linthouse Housing Association (Glasgow)
Japanese Cultural Garden Project (Brighton)
Liverpool Improved Dwellings (Garden View, Woolton)
Whitstable Soc Account (Railway Station Project)
Coach Road Estate Tenants' & Residents' Association (Wakefield)
Safe Haven Trust (Blackburn)
Well Street Forum (Paisley)
West Bank Community Forum (Adopt a Garden, Widnes)
Marsh Green Gardening Club (Wigan)
One Voice Residents Association (Wigan)
Duffryn Community Link (Newport)
Woodgate Residents Association (Leicester)
Berecroft Residents Association (Essex)
Burradon & Camperdown Forum (Northumberland)
Daisy Hill in Bloom (Daisy Hill Residents, Bolton)
Peacemaker (Oldham)
Moorpark Community Association (Renfrew)
Whitechapel Tenants Association (London)
Westbourne Neighbourhood Environmental Action Team (Telford)
St Stephen's Millenium Green Trust (Bath)
Garston Urban Village Hall (Speke)
Jane E Cummins (Urban Islands, Preston)
Violet Avenue Tenants & Residents Association (Uxbridge)
Truus Davies (Spray Lane, Isleworth)
Fitzrovia Youth in Action (Intergenerational Project, London)
Ashburton in Bloom (Medieval Style Herb Garden, Devon)
Cowley Estate Management Board (Lambeth)
Moorpark Youth Centre (Renfrew)
Holyhead Unemployed Workers Centre (Anglesey)
Phythian Estate residents Association (Liverpool)
Ellistown Community Action Forum (Leicestershire)
HMTCOURTRA (Hermitage Court, Wapping)
Cockenzie & Port Seton Comm Village in Bloom (East Lothian)
Pimlico Village Housing Co-operative Ltd (London)
St Mary's PCC Church Account (Partington, Manchester)
Halmerend Village Association (Stoke on Trent)
Parents of Pear Tree (Derby)
Yoker Resource Group (Glasgow)
Manningham Housing Association (Patio Containers, Keighley)
Netherholm Area Association (1st Time Gardeners, Glasgow)
Track 2000 (Cardiff)
Miles Mitchell Tenants Association (Plymouth)
Leavers Class Fund (Ysgol Belmont, Flintshire)
Astley & Tyldesley Residents Association (Manchester)
The Hawbush Tenants Association (Dudley)
Prestwich High School (Bury)
All Seasons Gardening Club (Litmus Project, Southwark)
Rastrick Youth Forum (Field Lane Community, Halifax)
Burrowes Street Co-operative Ltd (Walsall)
Moorpark Family Centre users Group (Renfrew)
West Johnstone Family Centre (Renfrewshire)
Whinfield Residents Association (Darlington)
St John's Community Initiatives (Stockton on Tees)
Handsworth Community Gardens (Sheffield)
Voluntary Service Lisburn (Lisburn)
Podsmead Neighbourhood Project (Glos)
Tottington & Bury West Rotary Club (Bury)
Millarston Community Forum (Paisley)
Venus (Bootle)
St James Gardening Club (Darwen)
Woodlands Farm Trust (Welling)
St Werburghs City Farm (Bristol)
Killesher Community Development Assoc (Fermanagh)
Ballykinlar, Tyrella & District Assoc (Downpatrick)
Welshpool House Tenants Association (Hackney)
Linwood ATC parent/carers Group (Renfrewshire)
Sikh Community & Youth Service (Birmingham)
Cavanacarragh Community Association (Fermanagh)
Johnstone Castle Learning Centre (Renfrewshire)
Benwell Nature Club (Northumberland)
Heathfield Leisure Pursuits (Newton Abbot)
Herbrand Street Tenants Association (Westminster)
Fairbank Community Association (Hackney)
Sydenham Environmental & Comm Group (Belfast)
Rockcliffe Residents Association (Whitley Bay)
Blackmill Environment Group (Bridgend)
Dudley Fields Tenants Association (Dudley)

Flower Friendly Street Garden Club (Leicester)
 Association of Parkdale Residents (Wolverhampton)
 Herefordshire Nature Trust Ltd (Hereford)
 Cotmanhay Community Concern (Ilkeston)
 Orchard Way (Shirley Court QRS) Residents Assoc (Croydon)
 Dalmuir Park Housing Association (Clydebank)
 Lenton & Radford Neighbourhood Assoc (Nottingham)
 Nunsthorpe & Bradley Park Resource Centre (Grimsby)
 Neville Close Residents Association (Acton)
 Stockport Nature Network (Stockport)
 Rhondda Cynon Taff County Boro Council (Rhondda Valley)
 Foyle Hill Environmental Group (Derry)
 Robin Hood Millenium Green Trust (Poplar)
 Johnson Avenue Residents Association (Gillingham)
 Wattlebridge & Derrykerrib Comm. Assoc. (Fermanagh)
 Merry Hill, Oakley & Buckley & Warstons Network (Wolverhampton)
 Wigan Pre-School Playgroup (London)
 North Benwell Community Action Group (Northumberland)
 The London Road Partnership (Bath)
 D & DCE ltd FSC A/C (Derrygonnelly, Femanagh)
 TIC Tenants & Residents Association (Beswick, Manchester)
 Clapton Community Housing Trust (Southwold, Hackney)
 Cleverly Estate Tenants Association (Shepherds Bush)
 Meadowfield Community Garden Project (Rochdale)
 Castlemara Residents Association (Carrickfergus)
 Peabody Estate Tenants Association Lillie Road (Fulham)
 Grange Villa Action Group (Chester Le Street)
 Northern Quarter Association (Manchester)
 Ringland Centre Neighbourhood Watch (Newport)
 Hamiltonhill Allotment Association (Glasgow)
 CSV Environment: 2 projects: Barnesville Community
 Garden & Longacre Community Garden (Birmingham)
 Manchester Road County Residents Assoc. (Leigh)
 Harwal Action Group (Redcar)
 Formosa Tenants & Residents Association (Liverpool)
 Poplar HARCA (Burdett Youth Club, Poplar)
 Prestwich Residents Association (Bury)
 Bosworth Street Tenants Association (Manchester)
 Malago Valley Conservation Group (Bristol)
 East Ham Fire Station (London)
 MVUF Ltd (Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, Leeds)
 TAPE (Tenants Association Peabody Estate, Hammersmith)
 Stapleton Road Station (Bristol)
 Halmerend Memorial Garden (Stoke on Trent)
 Mid Fach River Care Group (Rhondda)
 Carrickfergus YMCA Glenfield PAKT Account (Carrickfergus)

Lockwood & Thornton Lodge Residents Against Crime (Hudd'field)
 Grangetown in Bloom (Middlesbrough)
 Greenisland Knockagh Youth Club (Carrickfergus)
 Social Ventures Account (Bristol)
 Wild Street Tenants Association (London)
 Fairfield Residents Association (Warrington)
 Wilford Crescent West Tenants & Residents (Nottingham)
 East Midlands in Bloom (Coton)
 Bilbrough Area Community Association (Benwell)
 CSV Environment: 2 projects @ £1,000 each: St Saviours Road
 Community Project & Adderley Community Garden (Birmingham)
 Willow Park Residents Association (Glasgow)
 Carnany Community Association (Ballymoney)
 Grosvenor Community School (Whitley Bay)
 Spitalfields City Farm Assc. Ltd (London)
 Sunderland City Residents Association (Sunderland)
 Portknockie Community Council (Banffshire)
 Isle of Wight Council Receipts Account (Ryde)
 Delves Lane Community Association (Consett)
 Rectory Place Action Group (London)
 Newcastle Healthy City Project (Newcastle)
 Chelsea & Wellington Tenants Association (London)
 Peabody Court Tenants Fund (Camberwell, London)
 Lions Close Community Group (London)
 Kilncroft Neighbourhood Council (Edinburgh)
 St Martins Assc of Residents & Tenants (Brampton)
 Hyde Park Source Ltd (Leeds)
 Sojourners House (Manchester)
 Haughton Green Boys Club & Youth Club (Denton)
 Harehills Tower Association (Newcastle)
 Environkirk Action Group (Dunoon)
 The Blasket Association (Edinburgh)
 Fens Pool Voluntary Association (Brierley Hill, Dudley)
 Sealand Manor Residents Association (Flintshire)
 Stepping Stones Playgroup Bonus Account (Ballymoney)
 Killyrammer & District Community Association (Ballymoney)
 Windsor Residents Association (Carrickfergus)
 Brampton Community Association (Carlisle)
 Friends of the Green (Wallsend)
 Rhyl West Central Residents Association (Rhyl)
 West Rhyl Marine Residents Association (Rhyl)
 Strangford in Bloom (County Down)
 HELP (Ashington)
 Glebeside Community Association (Ballymoney)
 Maes Mawr Residents Association (Neath)
 Bordesley Green Leisure Gardens Residents Assoc (Birmingham)
 Sunnyside Residents & Tenants Association (Bolton)
 Hartley Street Residents Association (Boston)
 OPERA (Birmingham)
 BADJER (Jacksdale, Nottinghamshire)
 Eastwood Trades Guild (Nottingham)
 His Upper Room Trust (Alfreton)
 Peabody Estate Association (Dalgarno, London)
 The Estate (Brixton)

Causeway Trust (Robinson Horticultural Centre, Ballymoney)
 Graig Road Residents Garden Project (Ynysir, Rhondda)
 North East Sheffield Conservation Group (Sheffield)
 Poets Corner Garden Project (Acton)
 South Reddish Community Association (Stockport)
 Elizabeth Close Residents Garden Association (Spixworth, Norwich)
 Pride in Our Block (Southampton)
 BHT&R ASS HALL A/C (Bromley)
 Anchor Trust (Benwell, Newcastle)
 East Wickham Conservation Volunteers (Welling)
 Stamford Street Tenants Association (London)
 Portsmouth Council of Community Services (Portsmouth)
 Rosyth Community Council (Rosyth)
 Bosco Juniors (Glasgow)
 Tamlaght Community Assoc No 2 Account (Enniskillen)
 Richmond & West Tenants & Residents Assoc (Ashton under Lyne)
 Longridge Road Tenants Association (Preston)
 Rothes Council Millenium Group (Aberlour)
 Garthdee Parish Church Millenium Fund (Aberdeen)
 Clabby Dev Assoc (Fermanagh)
 Freightliners Farm Ltd (Islington, London)
 Bransholme Motivation (Hull)
 Gortnaghey Community Association (Dungiven)
 The Green Association (Small Heath, Birmingham)
 St Mary's Gardening Action Group (Woolwich, London)
 British Airways Northolt Residents Association (Northolt)
 Forches Regeneration Committee (Barnstaple)
 Bushmills Residents Association (Antrim)
 Killyvalley Residents Association (Garvagh)
 Ingol & Tanterton Action Group (Preston)
 TASC (Medlock Herb Gardens, Manchester)
 Newcombe Close & Area Homewatch (Beswick, Manchester)
 Springbank Nursery Parent Staff Association (Paisley)
 Shaw Trust Ltd (Ashford, Kent)
 Seaton Burn Community Partnership (Newcastle)

Selwyn Court Tenants Association (Splott, Cardiff)
 G.A.S. Group Garw Advisory Committee (Blaengarw, Bridgend)
 Thornhill Tenants & Residents Association (Egremont)
 Mina Housing Co-op Ltd (Bristol)
 Harwal Action Group (Redcar)
 Callerton Tenants & Residents Association (Newcastle)
 Action for Arthurs Hill Ltd (Newcastle)
 Cathedral Community Services (Belfast)
 Beechwood Community Centre (Paisley)
 Carraghmore Community Group (Glenulin, Garvagh)
 Watermead & Falkland Tenants Association (London)
 Mid Fach River Care Group (Rhondda)
 Walkden Central Residents Assoc (Walkden)

Bray's Lane Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (Coventry)
 Norwich Unemployed Support Trust (Norwich)
 Friends of Vauxhall City Farm (Vauxhall, London)
 Mrs Marilyn C Murrey & Mr Reginald Edward Maflin (Diss Street Garden, London)
 Friends of the Red Cross Day Centre (Scarborough)
 Sandbank Village Hall Improvements (Argyll)
 Neyland WI (Honeyborough Green, Neyland, Milford Haven)
 Bluebell Residents Association (Peterborough)
 Springbank Mothers Action Group (Paisley)
 Thannington Residents Association (Canterbury)
 Cwm Community Action Group (Betws-y-Coed)
 Castlemara Residents Association (Carrickfergus)
 Clapton Community Housing Trust (London)
 Coach Road Estate T&RA (Wakefield)
 Butts Road Residents Association (Southwick, West Sussex)
 Hurstfield Towers Residents Association (Lancing, West Sussex)
 Mash Barn Residents Association (Lancing, West Sussex)
 King George Area Residents Association (Shoreham, West Sussex)
 Camelford Forum (Camelford)
 Clydach Chamber of Trade (Clydach, Swansea)
 Brunel Festival Association (Neyland, Milford Haven)
 Pontefract chamber of Trade & Commerce (Pontefract)
 Gosport Development Trust (Gosport) - Seafeld House
 Magennis Makeover Project
 Tillydrone Family Centre (Aberdeen)
 Moulsecombe Forest Garden & Wildlife Project (Brighton)
 Leiston United Church (Leiston, Suffolk)
 Bude in Bloom (Bude)
 GCVS Core (Glasgow)
 Rasharkin Women's Group (County Antrim)
 Rasharkin Community Association (County Antrim)
 Clapton Community Housing Trust (East London)
 Balsall Heath Forum (Birmingham)
 Bysingwood Road Resident Democracy Board (Faversham, Kent)
 Delabole Development Group (Cornwall)
 Action for Stannington (Sheffield)
 Cefnpennar & District Welfare Association (Mountain Ash)
 Purford Green Community Centre (Harlow)
 Highfield Residents Association (Cockermouth)
 Berry Brow Infant & Nursery School (Huddersfield)
 Brynmawr Town Centre Partnership (Blaenau Gwent)
 Methley's Neighbourhood Action (Leeds)
 CVS (Medway) (Chatham)
 Loughiel Community Action (Ballymena)
 Garnethill Community Council (Glasgow)
 Leiston Tree Group (Leiston, Suffolk)
 Leiston Tree Group (Leiston, Suffolk)
 Llantarnam Oakfield Court Farm Assc (Cwmbran)
 TASC (Canterbury)

Smithton Residents Association (Inverness)
 Grosvenor Tenants & Residents Assc (Southwark, London)
 Playspace Association (Bradford)
 Salterbeck Residents Association (Workington) - handling grant for 3 groups
 Salterbeck Women's Group (Workington)
 Salterbeck Youth Club (Workington)
 4 Courts Residents Association (Shoreham)
 Flodeuog Harlech (Harlech)
 AORTA (Peabody Estate, Westminster, London)
 Isgraig Tenants & Residents Association (Burry Port)
 Blaenau Bendigedig (Blaenau Ffestiniog)
 Sheringham in Bloom (Sheringham)
 Montague Street Gardening Club (Brighton)
 PCC of St Anne & St George (Brighton)
 Skye Edge Project 2000 (Sheffield)
 BS Community Garden Group (Bedminster, Bristol)
 Monkton Garden Project (Pembroke)
 APTLL (Alexandra Park Tool Loan Library) (Whalley Range, Manchester)
 Peterborough City Council (Brewster Wildlife Garden, Peterborough)
 Community & Voluntary Organisations of Sedgfield (Shildon)
 Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve (Headingley, Leeds)
 Groundforce Placemaking (Brighton)
 Harlesden Environmental Action Residents & Traders (Harlesden, London)
 The Pankhurst Centre (Manchester)
 Windyhall Community Garden (Coleraine)
 Millfield Residents Association (Sompting, West Sussex)
 Star Project (Paisley)
 Moorpark Community Association (Cherrie Centre, Paisley)
 South End Street (Paisley)
 Cumbernauld YMCA-YWCA (Millcroft, Cumbernauld)
 Home-Start Glasgow Pollackshaws (Glasgow)
 Pitlochry in Bloom (Pitlochry, Perthshire)
 Cathkin Braes Playscheme (South Lanarkshire)
 Stakeford & Summerville Community Resource centre (Dumfries)
 Dundee Age Concern (Dundee)
 Reidvale Gardening Club (Children's Gardening Club, Glasgow)
 Hawick in Bloom (Hawick)
 The Sir Harry Lauder Memorial Fund (Portobello, Edinburgh)
 The Alpha Project No2 Account (Cumbernauld)

Ormlie Community Association (Thurso)
 West Whitlawburn Community Dev Committee
 Bonus Ball Resource Centre
 Melrose & District Community Council (Tait's Well, Melrose)
 Lochwinnoch Millenium Events Group (Renfrewshire)
 Motherwell & District Women's Aid (Refuge Garden, Motherwell)
 Alyth in Bloom (Perthshire)
 Lanarkshire Primary Care NHS Trust (Red Deer Day Hospital, East Kilbride)
 Halfway Fruit Barra (Cambuslang)
 Abronhill Regeneration Forum (Cumbernauld)
 Clean Up Soroba (Oban)
 Crieff in Leaf (Perthshire)
 Rattray Garden (Perthshire)
 South Kessock Residents Association
 Lache Adventure Playground Association (Chester)
 SIP Burnbank (Hamilton)
 Forest of Belfast (Lisburn)
 Newmains Sustainable Community Project (North Lanarkshire)
 Smarter Salsburgh (North Lanarkshire)
 Flodeuog Harlech (Harlech)
 Ladywood Community & Health Centre (B'ham)
 Adopt a planter
 Ladywood Community & Health Centre (B'ham)
 Garden Improvements
 Ladywood Community & Health Centre (B'ham)
 Spring Bulbs
 Sikh Community Centre (B'ham)
 Mental Health Aberdeen (Healthy Roots, Aberdeen)
 Smarter Salsburgh (North Lanarkshire)
 ATLAS (Alvey gardening Group, Southwark, London)
 St Matthew's (Environmental area, Enfield, London)
 Poulton Residents Association (Morecambe)
 Morecambe Neighbourhood Council (Morecambe)
 Woodbine Crescent residents Association (Stockport)
 Friends of Ayresome Gardens (Middlesbrough)
 Balsall Heath Forum (Birmingham)
 Rasharkin Women's Group (County Antrim)
 Kilcooley
 COPY -Cwm Ogmore project for Youth (Bridgend)
 Wyndham Boys & Girls Club (Bridgend)