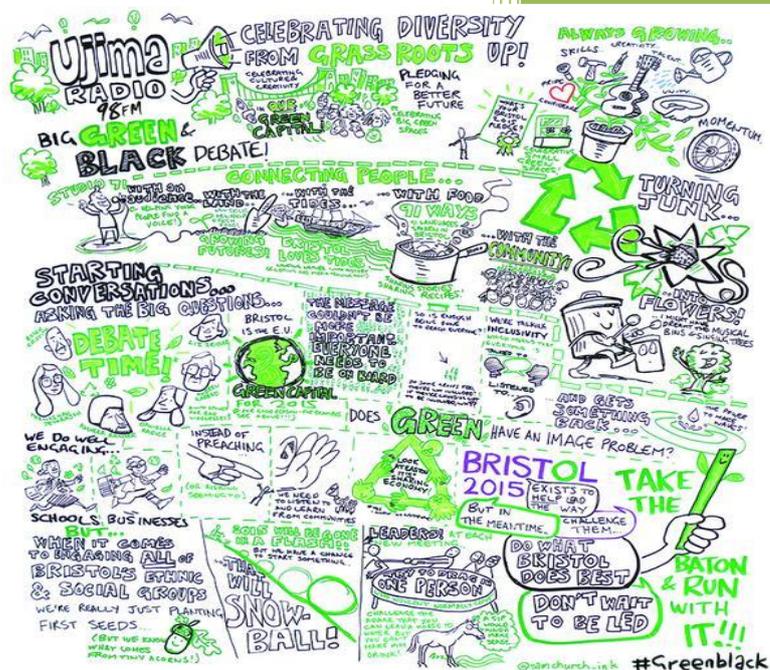


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The Green and Black Report: A report on Ujima Radio's initiative to involve Black Minority Ethnic communities in the Green agenda during Bristol European Green Capital 2015



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January 2016

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1. THE GREEN AND BLACK REPORT – AN INTRODUCTION

The following is a report on the activities of an initiative launched by Ujima Radio in response to Bristol European Green Capital 2015. This initiative also comes out of some of the key challenges of engaging the Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME_ community, faced by the Bristol Green Capital Partnership.

The key aims of the report are to:

- Give background and context to some of the issues faced by the Green and Environmental agenda in working with BAME communities.
- Highlight the work Ujima Radio undertook during the Bristol European Green Capital Year under its ‘Green and Black’ campaign.
- Report on the Green and Black Conversation workshop, held with members of the BAME community.
- Prepare for future partnership working and activities.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE GREEN AND BLACK CAMPAIGN

This report should now be seen in the wider context of the deficit of BAME-led organisations that over a generation have disappeared. It points to more challenges ahead in capacity building, infrastructure, support and resources, for the BAME community. This report and initiative cannot solve these problems but can highlight the underlying issues and action required to address the widening gaps in race equality and also diversity and inclusion within Bristol.

The five key issues to take forward are:

- i. Terminology – culture and ownership
- ii. Profiling of activity that takes place in white middle-class neighbourhoods
- iii. Creating a new set of stories which relates to the Green issue
- iv. Leadership and decision-making
- v. Active projects that make the difference not policies.

Many of these issues are not unique to the BAME community but this report highlights them to avoid unnecessary repetition.

3. BACKGROUND – UJIMA'S WORK PRE EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL 2011-2014

Bristol is one of the most vibrant cities in the UK and it enhanced its reputation internationally when on 14th June 2013, the city was awarded the honour of European Green Capital of the Year 2015.

There were many events and initiatives to celebrate this achievement, however at Ujima Radio when we began to talk on and off air about European Green Capital, environmentalism, resources and associated events, many BAME members felt once again marginalised and left out of the Green Capital agenda.

We began a campaign to at least ensure, via our airwaves and digital media, that the voices we were hearing and engaging with were not ignored. We launched the 'Green and Black' initiative, led and co-ordinated by Ujima's Special Project Manager

Julz Davis. We ensured that key questions about diversity, inclusion, and working in communities, were included alongside the main issues on the environmental agenda such as climate change.

The campaign built on a 2012 Ujima environmental initiative where Ujima's Business Development Director Paul Hassan and Roger Griffith had trained several community members aged between 18 and 30 on a Citizen Journalism (CJ) project supported by University of West of England's Widening Partnership Team. Our Citizen Journalists attended the lectures of leading environmental campaigners and worked on media projects on the effect of environmental issues in their community such as the M32, which divides St Pauls and Easton, being one of the most polluted corridors in Western Europe. We also covered how noise and air pollution affects the nearby Millpond Primary School and how these issues impacted on local residents who live by the Junction 3 M32 roundabout. Ujima Radio covered these issues and promoted healthy living, with exercise and dietary tips, and looked at the transport issues facing Bristol.

Roger Griffith had also written a briefing paper in 2011 addressing some of the challenges in engaging with the green agenda and it was clear from meeting with Development Director of Bristol Green Capital Partnership Gary Topp and key advocate of this initiative that these issues still remained where yet to be addressed.

Despite this track record and lack of resources to fully promote our work, Ujima was unsuccessful in its application for a major European Green Capital Grant Award. However, Ujima used this as a catalyst to hold the city leaders accountable in terms of participation and diversity. We decided to embrace the opportunities presented by Green Capital, and continued to ensure the needs of our community would remain high on the Green Agenda by highlighting wider issues of inclusion, engagement and communication.

4. UJIMA GREEN & BLACK ACTIVITIES IN 2015

A number of activities took place including:

- Engaging with Green leaders, Elected Mayor and senior Bristol City Council leaders and them in turn taking the time to listen and then engage with grass roots communities.
- Outside Broadcasts and coverage of Flagship events including Bridging The Gap, Green Youth Fair.
- ‘Green and Black Conversations’ debates in the community and at the Harbourside.
- Sharing community knowledge of green and black stories
- Improved Ujima internal green and environmental stories with volunteers and initiative supported by Board, Management and Volunteers.
- The Green and Black Mural (please see the report cover, which captures key elements of the Green and Black Conversations).
- Improving access in civic participation for BAME community and building positive networks.
- Increased participation and opening up opportunities for Ujima and community members in our role as acting as conduit between city leaders and BAME and marginalised communities.
- Visit of European Member of Parliament Clare Moody.

5. THE GREEN AND BLACK CONVERSATION – 27TH NOVEMBER 2015 - HELD AT ST WERBURGH’S COMMUNITY CENTRE

In order to take this initiative forward we needed to convene a group of community members and key stakeholders together. A team from Bristol Green Capital Partnership, the University of Bristol, (Cabot Institute and Policy Bristol) worked on preparing a bid to facilitate this. The event was curated and facilitated jointly by Julz Davis and Roger Griffith of Ujima Radio.

a) Introductions: Scene-Setting by Ujima facilitators

Audio clips were played of interviews during the Green and Black Conversations held with community members. Rich Pancost, Professor at the University of Bristol and Director of Cabot Institute gave an overview of how environmental issues can affect those in the poorest communities, citing Hurricane Katrina which struck New

Orleans in USA. He also talked of how 'Environmentals' can push an agenda onto communities.

b) Ice-breaker

Short, sharp capture moments were used during the event to document immediate thinking.

- My green thing – what is my Green issue?
- One good thing about the Green Agenda?
- One not so good thing about the Green agenda?

c) CONVERSATION 1 – Barriers to Participation

- Use of environmental language needs to be simpler. It baffles people. What does it mean? An example discussed was Sustainability.
- Bristol European Green Capital 2015 funding streams. Successful applications appeared to come from organisations with strong and existing ties with the council, with few grants going to other groups.
- Smaller community organisations worked in silos and were not networked with leading organisations. As a result they struggled to put in quality bids, did not have professional fundraisers or those with fundraising experience, were not connected within the 'system' and unaware of the 'rules of the game'.
- More diverse boards and groups required to make better informed decisions.
- No drive from local Green party to BEGP 2015 agenda.
- 'Them and Us' – the Green Agenda was perceived as elitist.
- 'Walls' i.e. barriers between people are bigger in this city than elsewhere, making diversity and inclusion a challenge.
- 'Fear', explained by people holding onto power, maintaining the status quo and not addressing inclusion or equality of opportunity.
- Community Organisations listened to, but not understood.
- No space to talk about race and inequality within the Green Agenda.
- Equally a non-political agenda was put forward. The tone was 'let's be proud [of the European Green Capital status] and not make a fuss'. This should have been a time for mature open and honest conversations.
- 'Black people aren't green'. It's an excuse, a point of view, and not a fact.

- Bordeaux Quay as a venue is not inclusive and symbolised a lack of inclusiveness in general in BEGP 2015.
- A lack of understanding and cost of organic food, were raised as issues.
- The way that BAME people are being involved and asked to engage is a barrier. It's not on their terms and they are asked to solve problems without resources.
- There is a lack of activism and social engagement within the BAME community. Either not being listened to or not actively engaging. Why?
- A need to ensure we are not having these same conversations in years to come. Break the cycle!

d) CONVERSATION 2 – Engagement & Inclusion

- Communication to BAME communities is vital and needs to be regular, often and inclusive.
- The Green and Black Agenda can be one way of tackling inequality and division in the city.
- Certain communities had a bigger engagement in green agenda, for example the LGBT Pride event. This can be used as an example.
- 'Get out of Bordeaux Quay!' (the city centre syndrome).
- Effort of using 'Make Sunday Special' in communities rather than central locations was seen as a success.
- Training use of newsletters to spread information from key organisations i.e. VOSCUR and community Ujima/BCFM radio stations.
- Continue to raise knowledge and awareness of the campaign within these communities and not confine it to one year.
- Improve the culture of organisations through environmental leadership and practices. For example at Knowle West Media Centre staff and volunteers imbedded green initiatives into their way of working.
- Use of Arts to spread awareness was a success. Although some were regarded as very 'high end i.e. high-concept art' (i.e. fog on Pero Bridge).
- No Equalities monitoring of events means no capturing of data and information.

- No signs or sponsorship in the community i.e. Stapleton Road. Easton market traders asked 'where were the banners, Green signs and badges?'

Key questions going forward:

- What does Green actually mean? Knowledge and awareness campaigns.
- What is being taught and told in schools on Green Agenda/Green Capital?
- What are discussions are needed to inform the agenda?
- Building bridges into the communities wherever they take place. Use existing events and cultural calendar.

e) CONVERSATION 3 – Early Solutions

- Use of forums discussions – i.e. Ujima's Green and Black Debate.
- Use of public transport, sponsorship and awareness, has helped First Bus Group think about their communication and engagement.
- Connecting people with a sustainable lifestyle.
- Large organisations need to ask for help, and also need to pay for expertise.
- Invest money into communities. Value. Use of cultural change.
- Use of community media and use of community/local artists has to be more widespread.
- Tackle the use of comfort food via educational food campaigns.
- Capacity building for fundraising required.
- Different ways of conversing with different and new groups.
- Funding knowledge and key organisations.
- Sell benefits of being Green. Equalities. Business. Social. Legal case.
- How can it be your (community) agenda?
- Simplify the language used for environmental campaigns.
- Look at 'crazy ideas' and use of crowdfunding.
- Hold conversations with communities and business.
- Have 'difficult' conversations within our BAME community as to lack of engagement in general.
- Positive Action required, with dedicated resources and time for capacity building.
- Co-curation and working with and for these communities.

f) Community Participants

- Carole Johnson
- Simon Nelson
- Shalondo Williams
- Michele Curtis
- Sophie Pritchard
- Charlene Lawrence
- Clayton Planter
- Nigel Jordan
- Mena Fubura
- Helly Dudley

g) List of Facillators and Speakers

- Roger Griffith – Ujima Radio & 2morrow 2day Community Consultants
- Julz Davis – Ujima Radio & Creative Curiosity Consultancy
- Gary Topp – Bristol Green Capital Partnership
- Rich Pancost – Cabot Institute & University of Bristol
- Kat Wall – University of Bristol & Policy Bristol
- Hayley Shaw – University of Bristol
- Vicki Woolley – Bristol Green Capital Partnership

6. NEXT STEPS

- Embed this work in the governance and leadership structures of the Bristol Green Capital Partnership
- Actively use media partners to be inclusive in promoting future Bristol Green Capital Partnership agenda.
- Continue this Green and Black forum and group as a core reference group alongside other specialist networks in the city
- Co- create a series of projects that build upon Green and Black, Eat your Greens, 91 ways and others to create an ongoing portfolio of activity.
- Use of existing forums i.e. BAME Voice, BUDS (Bristol Urban Dining Society), and Black Manifesto.
- Use of associations such as Bristol Business School.
- Consider taking to a national/ international agenda.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The activities and discussions in this report outline two things very clearly: the 'green' debate in the city still carries too many hallmarks of something that is predominantly understood as a white middle class domain. Secondly that there is a strong narrative of existing and potential engagement across BAME communities in the city that needs to be recognised and developed.

This shift will require a different mix of leaders and voices, a continuous stream of positive project activity and a new narrative about meaning and engagement. Bristol is already a recognised leading city for progressive leadership and activity in creating a 'low carbon city with a high quality of life for all'. Creating a determined and extended engagement and leadership mechanism with BAME communities through the early ideas outlined above presents a further significant opportunity for it to be at the forefront of global action and thinking.

8. APPENDICES

- Photographs of Green and Black Conversation
- Helena Dudley Blog of the Green and Black Conversation

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- The Green and Black Conversation was partially funded by the University of Bristol Cabot Institute and an ERC Grant to RDP (T-GRES).

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