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PRESS RELEASE

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STRONGER LINKS BETWEEN ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES AND NATIONAL PARKS

The Campaign for National Parks (1) is celebrating after being awarded £932,314 for Mosaic (2), a three-year national project which will engage ethnic minority communities with the National Parks. The project will develop Community Champions for National Parks within black and ethnic minority groups in 20 cities across England. Mosaic will provide training to enable local Champions to promote the National Parks in their communities, organise visits to National Parks and establish cultural events and other activities to develop an interest in natural environments.

The project will provide Champions with a range of new skills including in leading walks, map reading, fundraising, working with the media and campaigning. This will help to ensure that the knowledge and experiences which they gain will continue to be shared once the project has ended.

The project will also focus on the organisations which run the 9 National Parks in England, who have committed to taking a major step forward in their attempts to reach a broader audience – for example by making promotional materials available in urban and cultural centres and helping their staff to become more aware of particular ethnic minority needs. Accommodation provider the Youth Hostels Association (3) will also be a key project partner, and is working hard to give visitors from ethnic minorities a warm welcome at its extensive network of hostels within the National Parks.

The Mosaic project will be hosted by the Campaign for National Parks, which has 8 years' experience working on the ground to engage ethnic minority communities with the National Parks. CNP will build on its previous experience, and its network of over 200 influential leaders of local ethnic minority communities who are already now actively promoting the National Parks in their communities.

The former Government Minister responsible for National Parks, Jonathan Shaw MP, has welcomed the approach taken by Mosaic: *"I think that the innovative approach to long-term engagement will be key to attracting minority communities to our parks. Active engagement like this within contemporary urban Britain should be held up as a fantastic example to others."*

Nurjuhan Ali Arobi, a member of the Bradford community, said: *"Mosaic gives me the skills and confidence to promote the Yorkshire Dales and help my community access the National Park. Before we would not have been aware of what was available there in terms of facilities, let alone the sheer natural beauty and that it was a place for us all to enjoy."*

This year is the 60th anniversary of the 1949 Act of Parliament which created the National Parks for the public benefit and enjoyment of all. Sixty years after the Act was passed, CNP wants to ensure that the National Parks remain relevant to all people in contemporary 21st century Britain.

For further information, please contact:

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Notes to editors

1. The Campaign for National Parks (CNP) is the national charity that campaigns to protect and promote National Parks for the benefit and quiet enjoyment of all.
2. Mosaic is a partnership between the Campaign for National Parks, the Youth Hostels Association and the 9 organisations that run the National Parks in England: the Broads Authority, Dartmoor National Park Authority (NPA), Exmoor NPA, Lake District NPA, New Forest NPA, North York Moors NPA, Northumberland NPA, Peak District NPA and the Yorkshire Dales NPA. Funding for Mosaic was awarded by Natural England through Access to Nature as a part of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme, with match funding provided by Nationwide Building Society and the partners themselves. Access to Nature aims to encourage people to appreciate England's countryside, particularly those who face social exclusion or people who currently have little or no contact with the natural environment.
3. The Youth Hostels Association runs 222 accommodation sites across England and Wales, 87 of which are in a National Park, and provides over 2 million overnight stays for members and guests each year.