

# ***London Borough of Bexley***

## ***News Release***

**For Immediate Release**

**19 May 2016 / PR 8319**

### **EXCITING TIMES AT LESNES ABBEY WOODS!**

The enhancement work at Lesnes Abbey Woods continues apace and is on track to finish in late summer 2016.

Exciting developments in early summer will see the opening of a new skyline viewing terrace, the refurbished fossil bed and Monks garden, as well as a new outdoor gym and trim trail. An improved play and recreation area which includes a junior off-road bike track will also be available for children of all ages to enjoy.

Cllr Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Environment and Leisure said,

"Lesnes Abbey Woods is one of the things that makes Bexley such a great place to live.

'This project is going to transform the site, and ensure people can enjoy it for many years to come. I want to thank all of those involved in this project and we all look forward to it opening.'

Several events will be taking place during the summer and include a family fun event on the afternoon of 30 July and a five a side football tournament for young people from projects run by the Youth Service.

The construction of Lesnes Lodge continues with the green roof nearing completion. Once complete the scaffolding surrounding the building will come down and work will then commence on an elegant terrace that will sympathetically frame the Lodge within the historic landscape. More detail on the ancient human remains and other stunning archaeological artefacts unearthed during construction will also be revealed. The care taken to safeguard these important and significant finds delayed the Lodge construction programme. The London Borough of Bexley continues to work with Historic England and other partners to manage and protect the site. The lodge is expected to open in late summer 2016.

The newly appointed, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) supported Estates Manager, Ian Holt and Partnership and Activities Manager, Tom Smith are now fully engaged in developing a volunteer and site event programme. This will include family fun days, small scale music events, educational walks and activities for young people, such as exploring the wildlife of the woods. Budding gardeners and conservationists will be

able to volunteer and get involved in the 'Gardening Club' in the Monks garden or in helping to conserve the site. Ian and Tom would be delighted to hear from individuals and groups interested in using and supporting the site.

London Borough of Bexley and its construction company Keanes Ltd recently won a bronze award in the 2016 Considerate Constructors Scheme National Site Awards for the enhancement work at Lesnes Abbey Woods. This award is given to those who demonstrate the highest levels of consideration and respect towards the public during construction work.

For more information on the enhancement project and on planned events at Lesnes Abbey Woods go to [www.visitlesnes.co.uk](http://www.visitlesnes.co.uk) or email [thomas.smith2@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:thomas.smith2@bexley.gov.uk)

Ends

- Attachment 1 - new seating area in the Monks Garden at Lesnes Abbey Woods
- Attachment 2 - new bike track at Lesnes Abbey Woods
- The improvements at Lesnes Abbey Woods have been made possible by a 'Parks for people' programme grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The £4.2m project is funded by the London Borough of Bexley and the Heritage Lottery Fund (which is investing £3.5m)
- The London Borough of Bexley is working with Oxford Archaeology and PPM Archaeology to date the ancient human remains and other artefacts found at the Lesnes Lodge construction site and is being advised by Historic England.

Attachments

- New bike track Lesnes Abbey Woods [New bike track Lesnes Abbey Woods](#)
- New Seating Area Monks Garden Lesnes [New Seating Area Monks Garden Lesnes](#)

