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ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 3 July 2012

As supplementary information, appendices are attached for item 8, "*Friends Annual Report*". The appendices are provided in electronic format only and provide further background to the Friends Annual Report. The appendices are also provided for information in the Members Room at the Civic Centre.

8 FRIENDS ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 3 - 22)

Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
www.bromley.gov.uk/meetings

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Since the merging of CPP, Parks Services & Countryside Management at the beginning of November 2011, the new Parks Rangers Service is going through significant change & these are, indeed, challenging times for us.

We have seen the first three months go by & have all worked very hard to deliver on all fronts as best as has been possible under the circumstances. This has also been a time of observation because by doing this, it allows us to gauge what we as a new, leaner team with a very broad remit, can realistically aim to deliver overall in the future.

As a result, next year, you will notice other headings, as per below. These may include things such as the reintroduction of walks & talks or children's activities such as Dinosaur Buzz Club.

The integration of Countryside/Habitat Management into this new service probably represents our biggest challenge due to the sheer quantity of work this entails & on an indefinite, cyclical basis. Once we have established what is realistically achievable for this team, figures for work undertaken will likely be listed here, separately from 'Parks Maintenance'.

Scratching at the surface, here, & all still very much in planning stages.

In the meantime, please find our core stats as follows:

Maintenance & Repairs: 735 sites, 2544 man/hrs.

Graffiti Removal: 113 incidences, 188 man/hrs.

Site Surveys/Checks: 849 site visits, 1062 man/hrs.

Fly-tip Collection: 272 incidences, 394 man/hrs. So far 87,380Kg collected & disposed of, 173 tip-runs, £12,500, disposal costs.

Vehicle Recoveries: 29 burnt-out/abandoned vehicles, 21 cars & 8 motorcycles recovered, 93.5 man/hrs.

Traveller convoys illegally camped & evicted: 5 convoys on LBB-owned land, 37.5 man/hrs legal process, Police liaison & subsequent eviction.

Parks & 'Payback' Community Service: Supplied tools/equipment to 61 Payback groups for tasks designated by Jackie Baxter, 86 Ranger man/hrs.

Payback Teams designated tasks by & working alongside Parks Rangers staff (or agreed by Jackie Baxter): 23 groups at 41 sites, 151 Ranger staff man/hrs.

Most recent & highly successful instance of this was during the Mountfield Estate (BR5) Multi-Agency Clean-up Operation, 17th January 2012. Rangers & Probationers started in Sandway Rec. then expanded into the estate. Our combined contribution to this effort:

- Removed 8m² of graffiti from Sandway Rec. play area
- Cut back vegetation affecting pathways
- Collected litter filling 56 large compactor sacks from Sandway Rec. but most came from green communal areas, pathways & other problem-spots identified in & around the estate.

- Removed two large trailer loads of waste with a combined weight of 1840Kg. One from Sandway Rec. (mixture of vegetative cuttings, litter & dumped waste) & one from pathway off Edenbridge Close (dumped large felled trees from adjacent garden).
- Cut up & removed a full-sized tree (around 60ft) left in an alleyway from an occupant's garden, as above.

Friends of Parks: Rangers have provided FG's with 164 assists, totalling 486 man/hrs. This support can take many forms from simply dropping off tools, supplying the Friends event caravan to full-commitment such as providing Ranger staff, vehicles, trailers, tools, equipment, materials & personal protective clothing for volunteers for the duration of an agreed workday. We ensure Health & Safety is adhered to & staff can provide additional services such as tree felling or vegetation management using tools such as chainsaws, industrial scrub-cutters & so on. We also remove & dispose of any fly-tipped waste or litter collected following such an event.

Community Projects & Events: On occasion, Parks Services staff assist community groups that do not fall within the parks maintenance remit. We are happy to help those who want to help themselves & make a difference to their local surrounding. The Blenheim Estate Residents Association (BERA) receive the same service as the 'Friends of Parks' groups, as do volunteers of the St. George's (Beckenham Green), St. John's (Penge) & Coney Hall Church Groups upon request. We have responded to such requests on 79 occasions this period, 334 man/hrs.

Formal Borough Parks Events: Parks Rangers Services have received & processed 266 formal applications for events such as firework displays, pageants, fetes, fairs & so on that take place at various parks within the borough following approval. Parks staff have contributed 113 man/hrs from the supply of support as requested by the organiser, to organisational responsibility & safety implementation at events such as the Crystal Palace Fireworks Display.

Junior Citizens Presentations: Rangers staff deliver presentations to Year 6 children regarding the hazards of illegal motorcycling & the effects of vandalism & anti-social behaviour roughly on a monthly basis as part of our commitment to the Safer Bromley Partnership. At the end of each event, approximately 500 children are seen. Parks Services staff so far have attended 17 days, 175 man/hrs, with almost 1750 children seen.

Parks Rangers, Ward Security & Police: As always, we continue to work closely together to form a very effective alliance, indeed. Having access to information regarding local crime via our 'Shopsafe' radios means Ward Security staff are often at the sharp-end & have, on numerous occasions, acted directly to help Police prevent crime or assist in apprehending offenders. Similarly, we are often called upon to assist Police in other ways. Recent examples include helping to cordon off an area around a suspected explosive device, helping to direct traffic at the scene of a serious road traffic collision, providing specialist handler & dog support to assist Police during anti-drug operations & assisting in the search for missing persons. So far, Parks Rangers have provided 8 assists, 42 man/hrs. **This does not include time spent by Ward Security assisting in tackling criminal activity.

NEW LEAVES PROJECT LEAVES GREEN ROAD TREE NURSERY.



The London Borough of Bromley are pleased to announce the development of a new tree nursery in Leaves Green Road.

A successful funding application from the Forestry Commission on behalf of the Mayor of London, enabled Friends of the Parks groups to join the Environmental Service Streetscene and Greenspaces officers in a planting day.



15 people enjoyed the sunshine, along with bacon sandwiches and cakes, to plant over 2000 indigenous hedging whips and transform a small unused piece of agricultural land in Leaves Green into a resource for local parks groups, schools and council tree services.

The funding covered cost of ground preparation, rabbit fencing, on going mowing costs as well as the hedging whips.



Friends groups are being encouraged to use the nursery to raise seed grown plants and self seeded year old whips from their woodland sites, with the idea that when they needed to replenish the trees in their woodlands, they would be able to use trees originally from their site.

Information packs are now available for each interested Friends group, to assist them to grow trees from seed and to safely and sustainably remove saplings from their sites that would not survive in the conditions where they have germinated.

This Nursery also gives us the opportunity to grow some trees on to be used as street trees.

The nursery will be a great training facility as growing trees will need care and pruning so groups can learn new skills whilst maintaining the site.



Schools can benefit by learning about hedgerows with the opportunity of lifting and replanting small hedges for their school grounds, one idea would be to run a competition looking at the diversity of a hedge.



Local scout groups and Nash College have been helping by making their own pots and planting tree seeds ready for the nursery later in the season.



Any Friends groups wanting Tree Growing and Planting guides please contact
Caroll Long
Healthy Lifestyles Officer LBB
Caroll.long@bromley.gov.uk

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Quarterly Penge Green Gym Report

October to December 2011

Introduction

This quarter has seen Penge Green Gym move towards its first autumn/winter in Winsford Gardens. Tasks have been concentrated on protecting the gardens for winter, and making preparations to increase colour and diversity of planting next spring. With all the exciting work in hand volunteer numbers have remained high, with a hardy core group braving the colder weather week on week – 10 volunteers have now attended over 20 sessions, with many others hard on their heels. The year was brought to a close with a Christmas party held in Winsford Gardens to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the project. This quarter has been a successful time for securing funding to cover capital costs, resulting in plenty of work to occupy volunteers over the next few months including building a Growing Area and planting over 700 native trees.

Green Gym Activities (total 13 sessions)

Maintaining Ornamental and Vegetable Beds (10 sessions)

Work to maintain the ornamental and vegetable beds has been continued on a weekly basis through weeding, edging the lawn borders, removal of self-seeding saplings, and pruning the shrubs and rose bushes. To protect the ornamental beds over winter volunteers mulched the beds with a thick layer of compost and woodchip, which will also serve to improve the soil for spring planting. A strenuous but worthwhile task which was completed with enthusiasm in October was scarifying the lawns, removing thatch and moss, to improve them for recreational use next year.



Working in the rose beds surrounded by spectacular autumn colours

Willow Coppicing and Fence Weaving (3 sessions)

Five committed volunteers joined BTCV's Action for Croydon's Environment team for a day of willow coppicing at nearby Heaver's Meadow. The material collected at this additional session was recycled at Winsford Gardens where volunteers created rustic fences to discourage trampling of some of the most vulnerable ornamental beds.



Turning the compost regularly speeds up the decomposition process

Composting & Leaf Mulching (10 sessions)

Rather than waste fallen autumn leaves, volunteers swept these up on a weekly basis, storing them for use next spring once it has broken down into rich crumbly mulch. Turning the compost in the bins to speed up the decomposition process has also become a regular task. Unfortunately anti-social behaviour reared its ugly head again in Winsford Gardens when youths were spotted using compost bins built earlier in the year to climb fences into neighbouring gardens. Urgent action was taken by volunteers to move the compost bins to a new location, reducing this risk to the neighbours. The determined volunteers dismantled the bins, successfully saving all the materials, before re-erecting them in the new position.



Penge Green Gym volunteers begin work on the second wildflower meadow

Wildflower Meadow (4 sessions)

To allow as much space as possible for spring wildflower meadows to be sown, the turf was removed from a second meadow area thus lowering the soil fertility and ensuring our native species of wildflower will thrive without competition. These native flower borders will create a stunning effect in the gardens, attracting insects and in turn increase wildlife. The regular Penge Green Gym volunteers were helped out on this task for one session by a group of students from Bromley College.

Bulb Planting (2 sessions)

A fantastic contribution to the gardens was made through a corporate group team building day. The group brought with them thousands of native bulbs to plant, including species which naturalise beautifully in lawns such as wild daffodils and crocuses, as well as woodland species like snowdrops and bluebells to plant in the wildlife area. A planting scheme was followed allowing each bulb to be planted in its natural habitat which will result in the most beautiful display next spring.

Growing Area (5 sessions)

Work began in earnest in December to construct a Growing Area in an underused corner of the gardens. This fenced off area will contain all facilities necessary for the group to propagate their own plants to increase the diversity of planting, colour and interest in the gardens. This will also provide an important training tool for the volunteers both during construction, and through learning the appropriate plant propagation skills. The final four Penge Green Gym sessions of 2011, and one corporate team building day, have been dedicated to levelling and laying paved foundations to support a 12ft by 8ft polycarbonate greenhouse, as well as constructing half of the 6ft timber fence which will secure the area. This exciting project is being supported by the London Borough of Bromley.



Constructing the foundations to the greenhouse

Events

The first Penge Green Gym Christmas party was celebrated on the 21st December 2011. After a short work session, volunteers broke early to enjoy a rustic BBQ Christmas lunch, joined by members of the London Borough of Bromley Parks and Greenspaces Team. During the party certificates were handed out to 10 regular volunteers who have attended over 20 sessions. Further social events are to be planned for the volunteers in 2012 to strengthen group cohesion.

Community and Health Referral Partners

New partnerships have been formed with the following organisations this quarter:

- Bromley College – Following a successful group volunteering session at Winsford Gardens, a new scheme has newly been introduced for 2012 where college leavers with mild learning disabilities will attend weekly Penge Green Gym sessions as part of a practical horticultural placement.
- Community Service Volunteers (CSV)



Pruning overhanging trees

Funding Partners

Capital Shopping Centres

London Borough of Bromley

Wellbeing Comes Naturally Programme

Corporate Partners: Two team building days with RBS

Bromley College: One student volunteering session

Capital funding:

The Green Gym has been successful in winning funding for capital costs this quarter, as follows:

- £1984.97 through London Borough of Bromley to fund the Growing Area including greenhouse, timber fence, seed beds and growing equipment. Work to be completed by March 31st 2012.
- £150 through Capital Growth to fund seeds, compost and equipment required for food growing. To be purchased by March 2012 for the spring growing season.
- £2502.18 Greater London Authority funding for 705 native hedgerow trees, and 11 orchard trees. Work to be completed in February 2012.

GLADES
BROMLEY

Bromley
THE LONDON BOROUGH
www.bromley.gov.uk

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BTCV. Registered Office: Sedum House, Mallard Way, Doncaster DN4 8DB. Reg. Charity in England 261009 and Scotland (SCO39302)

Publicity

With high numbers of volunteers attending each session and many new volunteers attending sessions through word-of-mouth, publicity has been stepped back this quarter and was primarily based on posting events on the standard websites. However, one notable publicity event was BTCV's national Big Green Weekend event, where Penge Green Gym was promoted at the successful regional event in Regent's Park.



Constructing weaved willow fences to protect ornamental beds

Looking forward

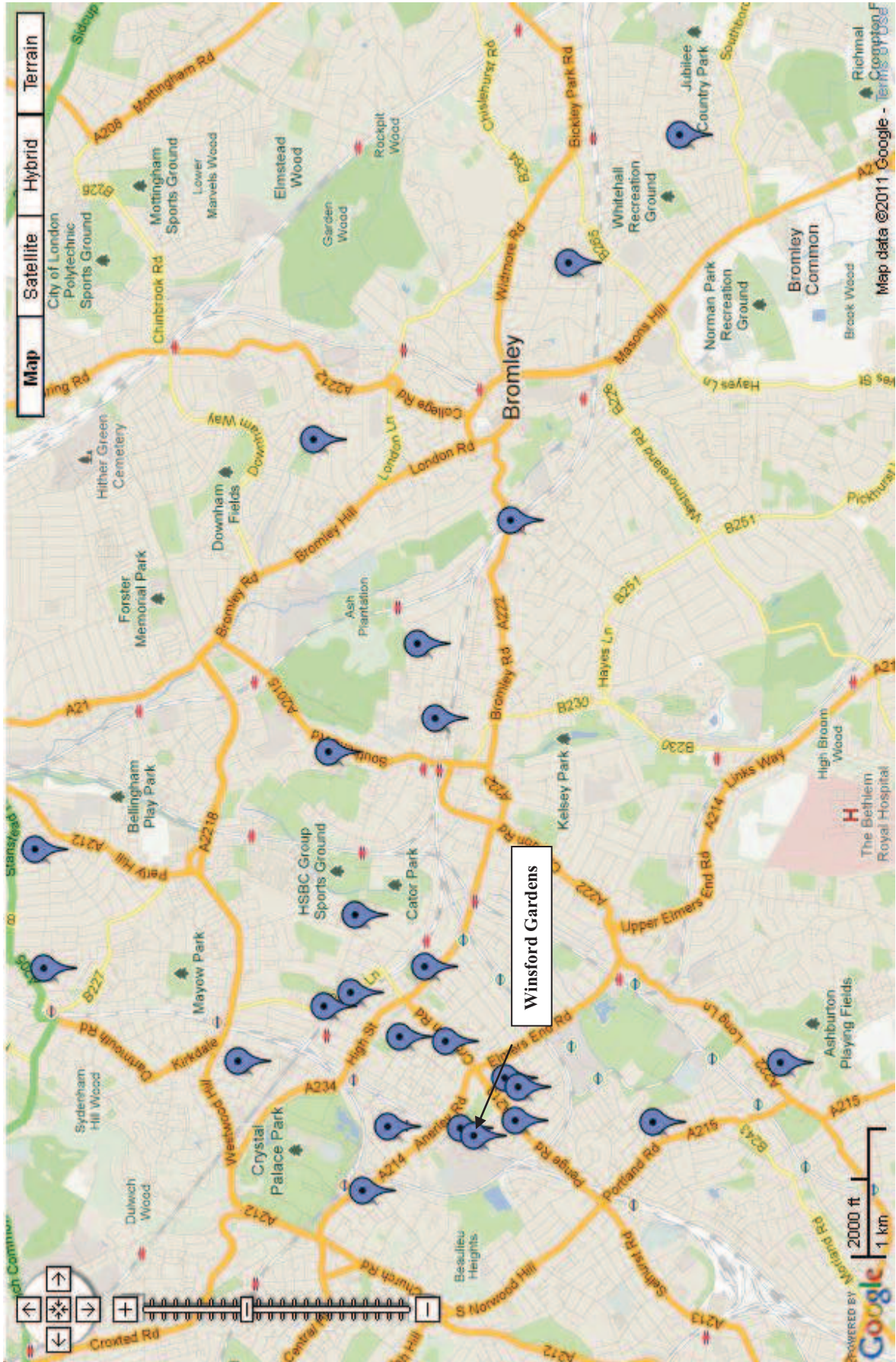
Over the next quarter Penge Green Gym will work to:

- Secure funding for the continuation of the project in 2012-13, looking to allow sufficient funding to develop a second Penge Green Gym session in nearby Betts Park to meet demand.
- Develop further health referral partners to target those most likely to benefit from the Green Gym, for example MIND and local GPs.
- Continue to recruit volunteers and develop their transferable skills.
- Develop facilities and further transform the garden for increased community use and biodiversity.
- Move further towards its aim of becoming self-sustaining: Volunteers will be trained to take on specific roles of responsibility in project sessions through on-site training and BTCV accredited training courses; volunteers will be involved in all aspects of project delivery; a volunteer led steering group will be set up in January to begin planning project days, events and sustainability.

Volunteer Statistics – October to December 2011

Penge Green Gym	
Sessions	13
Average registered volunteers per session	16
Workdays	208
New volunteers this quarter	10
Total registered volunteers attending this quarter	39
Gender	
Male	20 (51%)
Female	17 (44%)
Age (by person)	
<18	2 (5%)
<25	12 (31%)
<35	9 (24%)
<45	4 (10%)
<55	6 (15%)
<65	3 (8%)
Over 65	3 (8%)
Age (by workday)	
<18	4 (2%)
<25	36 (17%)
<35	43 (21%)
<45	38 (18%)
<55	55 (26%)
<65	13 (6%)
Over 65	19 (9%)
Ethnicity	
White British	82.1%
White Irish	5.1%
White Other	0%
Chinese	0%
Mixed/ White and Black Caribbean	0%
Mixed/ Other	2.6%
Asian or Asian British/ Pakistani	0%
Asian or Asian British/ Other	2.6%
Black or Black British/ African	5.1%
Black or Black British/ Caribbean	2.6%
Black or Black British/ Other	0%
Other	0%
Number of unemployed volunteers	22 (56%)
Number of volunteers with a disability	9 (23%)

Map showing volunteer locality to Winsford Gardens – October to December 2011



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River keepers and Junior River keepers.

Our Cray River has never looked so good! This is all due to two very successful groups who have taken responsibility for improving our environment around the river area. For the last year Thames 21 have been employed by Bromley council to run a local volunteer river keeper group every Monday. Our new riverkeeper Luke Damerum, has engaged with people from the Cray Valley to teach river keeping skills, habitat building, and yes the very important clear up programme. They are working alongside the Environment agency to improve the water quality and enjoyment for all and anyone walking along the river will have noticed the big difference. If anyone would like to join the Riverkeepers then they should contact Luke on 07824491166 or at luke.damerum@thames21.org.uk or check out the Thames 21 web page.

Junior river keepers has been running for two years and enables 11 children to engage with the river and help the environment.

This is run on a 'Voucher scheme' basis that was trialled in Tower Hamlets with amazing success in an inner city area, so for us to take the concept and use it in a country environment was new and innovative.

With our partners, Affinity Sutton, we piloted the scheme with 8 local children with encouraging results and then moved the project forward to enable the 11 children to become genuine river keepers. The children learn all skills from river clearing to flora and fauna management along with helping to put together a survey of the river. They also work in Riverside gardens on projects linked to the area, such as clearing an over grown path or raising tree crowns. The children have to put together their own risk assessments and learn to use tools and protective equipment safely.

After working for 3 hours which includes a question and answer session about the day, the children are given a £5.00 gift voucher from a local shop such as HMV, Game or Argos. We believe this provides two things, one the children learn the importance of work and reward, it is what we all strive for, a good days work for payment and also if the children have vouchers to spend in the local shops then they build up a respect for the shops and how rewarding it is to buy something with the money you have earned.

I know that this has changed the perspective of the children involved as many of them now save up their vouchers for something they really want, and also they are reporting things to me that are wrong, eg dumped rubbish or graffiti, not just in the river but around the Cray Valley so they are taking ownership of their area.

Caroll Long, Health Lifestyles officer LBB

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TREES AND WOODLANDS TEAM

In 2011 the team continued to support Friends groups on practical conservation projects at Biggin Hill Recreation Ground; Chislehurst Recreation Ground; Glentrammon Recreation Ground; High Broom Wood; Kelsey Park; Scadbury Park Local Nature Reserve; and South Hill Woods.

Three tree related training events were also presented. Young tree maintenance and tree identification at Kelsey Park, as well as tree identification at Chislehurst Recreation Ground. All three events were very well attended but as of yet we haven't had a Friend come forward to volunteer to lead on a walk this year.

The Boroughs woodlands were re-accredited to the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard which is a nationally recognised externally verified scheme for woodland management.

The following sites were inspected as part of our annual parks and greenspace surveying programme:

Allotments:

Goddard Road Allotments; Jubilee Allotments; Southlands Allotments; Tugmutton Allotments; Lovibonds Avenue; Adams Road Allotments; Belmont Lane Allotments; Biggin Hill Allotments; Bourne Vale Allotments; Halls Farm Allotments; Hill Crest Allotments; Horsell Road Allotments; Pine Walk Allotments; Ravensbourne Road Allotments; Sandford Road Allotments; Shortlands Allotments; West Wickham (Hawes Lane) Allotments; Wickham Road Allotments; Widecombe Road Allotments; Willow Grove Allotments.

Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards:

All Saints Church Yard; Biggin Hill Cemetery; Downe Church Yard; St Mary Cray Parish Churchyard; St Paulinus Churchyard.

Conservation and Woodland Sites:

Scadbury Park Local Nature Reserve; Hayes Common; South Hill Woods; Well Wood; Foxbury Wood;

Landscape and Recreation Sites:

Anerley Town Hall and Library; Beaver Close Embankment; Beaverwood Depot, Chislehurst; Beckenham Library; Beckenham Sports Centre Beckford Green; Biggin Hill Memorial Green; Bodmin Close Open Space Bredhurst Close Embankment; Bromley Indoor Bowling Centre; Broxbourne Gardens; Burham Close (Play Area); Burnt Ash Library; Charterhouse Green Crampton Road Embankment; Crofton Civic Halls; Green St Green Common Groves Linear Open Space; Crystal Palace Station Road; Lovelace Ave Open Space; Lullington Road Open Space; Mottingham Library; New Street Hill Open Space; Priory Library; Rangefield Road Footpath; River Pool Walk; Royston Field; Shaftesbury Park; Shell Close Open Space; Shortlands Library Southborough Library; Sparrows Den; St Pauls Cray Library; Stalisfield Place Walsingham Linear Park; Watermens Square; William Booth Open Space; Winsford Gardens; Biggin Hill Recreation Ground; Blake Recreation Ground; Broke Farm Drive Playground; Chelsfield Childrens P-G; Chelsfield Recreation Ground; Chislehurst Recreation Ground; Churchfields Recreation

Ground; Coney Hall Recreation Ground; Cudham Lane Recreation Ground; Cudham Recreation Ground; Edgebury Open Space; Eldred Drive Playground; Elmers End Recreation Ground; Farnaby Estate; Farnborough Recreation Ground; Fox Hill Playing Field; Glentrammon Recreation Ground; Grassmeade Recreation Ground; Havelock Recreation Ground; Hobblingwell Recreation Ground; Hookwood Road Playground; Husseywell Recreation Ground; Kings Meadow; Kings Road Recreation Ground; Lakes Road Playground; Leamington Playground; Magpie Hall Lane Recreation Ground; Martins Hill Recreation Ground; Mc Andrews Recreation Ground; Mottingham Recreation Ground (King Georg V P/F); Mottingham Sports Ground; Petts Wood Recreation Ground; Pickhurst Green & F/Path; Pickhurst Recreation Ground; Poverest Park; Priory Library Gardens; Queens Mead Recreation Ground; Repton/Eton Garage Play Area; St Paul's Cray Recreation Ground; Stanhope Recreation Ground; The Knoll Recreation Ground; Tubbenden Lane Playground; Turpington Lane Playground; Walden Rd Recreation Ground; Watermeadows; Wharton Road Playground; Widmore Recreation Ground'; Willett Recreation Ground.

In 2012 as well as the annual survey of all trees within children's play areas the following sites will be inspected: Alexandra Recreation Ground; Croydon Road Recreation Ground; Abbots Way Allotments; Beckenham Green; Beckenham Lane Allotments; Biggin Hill Rec Wood And Path; Broomhill Road (Common); Bull Lane Allotments; Chelsfield Allotments; Church House Gardens; Covet Wood; Dorset Road Allotments; Elmfield Community Woodland; Elmstead Lane Allotments; Elmstead Wood; Eynsford Close Allotments; Foxbury Allotments; High Broom Wood; Holy Trinity Allotments; Homesdale Road Allotments; Hook Farm Allotments; Kent House Lane Allotments; Keston Common; Lilly's Wood; Little Thrift Footpath; Lower Road Allotments; Maberley Playing Fields; Millward Road Allotments; Parish Churchyard St.Peter & St.Paul; Penge Recreation Ground; Plaistow Cemetery; Poverest Allotments; Queens Gardens; Rosemount Allotments; Roslin Way Allotments; Sandringham Road Allotments; Sparrows Wood; St Mary's Churchyard – Plaistow; Tugmutton Common; Turpington Lane Allotments; Upper Chesham Allotments.

Volunteer Hours Worked

	Person Hours
Alex'a Rec and	
Cator Park	460
Biggin Hill	2400
Bromley TP&G	250
BYAP	2070
Well Wood	420
Chi'st & Wal'n	3403
Chislehurst	
Common	2005
Coney Hall	246
Croydon rd	190
Cray Valley	300
Darrick &	
Newstead W's	2272
Glentrammon &	
Foxbury	485
Hayes Common	1200
Hayes Parks	180
High Broom	480
Hoblingwell	600
Hollydale	345
Kelsey (*)	3600
Keston Common	2450
Mottingham	108
Penge Parks	72
Priory Gardens	144
Royston Field	300
Scadbury	318
South H'l W&	
Kingsw'd Glen	551
Tugmutton	469
Warren Road	505
Willet Rec	350
Well Wood	420
SUB TOTAL	26593
Nash	1024
Green Gym	2880
Grow Time	3456
River Keepers	2080
SUB TOTAL	9440
GRAND TOTAL	36033

36033 DIVIDED
BY 7 X £50
=£257378.57

Groups	Money	
	Grants	Sponsorship sales subscriptions
Alex'a Rec and		
Cator Park	3973	
Biggin Hill	55263	1947
Bromley TP&G		
Well Wood		
Chi'st & Wal'n	1799950	
Chislehurst		
Common		1700
Coney Hall		
Croydon rd		
Cray Valley	1300	
Darrick &		
Newstead W's	5000	
Glentrammon &		
Foxbury	4985181	
Hayes Common		
Hayes Parks		
High Broom	55000	
Hoblingwell		
Hollydale	4810	
Kelsey (*)		
Keston Common	14768	
Mottingham		
Penge Parks		
Priory Gardens		
Royston Field		200
Scadbury		
South H'l W&		
Kingsw'd Glen	85200	
Tugmutton		
Warren Road		
Willet Rec		
Nash		
Green Gym		
Grow Time		
Total	7,010,445.00	3847

Totals

	£
Income	3,314
Grant Funding	7,010,445
Sponsorship Value	3,847
Total	7,017,606