The Spring and Summer seasons are the busiest times for the Borough’s parks and greenspaces, as we all look to take advantage of the hopefully warmer weather. This year, fingers crossed, and weather permitting, will hopefully prove no different, with many local events adding to the enjoyment.

If you are a member of one of Bromley’s many Friends of Parks groups, your continued involvement and support have been absolutely key to maintaining the virtually unique quality of our green spaces, compared to those found in other London Boroughs, and all thanks and full credit to you for the generous work that you continue to provide.

Despite the unprecedented financial challenges facing the Council, we remain focussed and committed to supporting individual Friends groups and the Friends Forum, and the recent re-structuring changes within the Civic Centre have been designed with that aim very much in mind.

Particular thanks are also due to Bromley staff at this time, for their quiet professionalism and diligent hard work at a time of great personal stress and uncertainty for them all, over the future shape of the service, also of course to The Landscape Group, the Council’s contractor.

We are determined and certain that by continuing to work together in this way, we can and will build further on everything we have achieved so far.

Councillor Colin Smith
Portfolio Holder for Environment

Friends of Whitehall Rec’s fundraising firsts!

Make a note in your dairy for Saturday 23 May when the Friends of Whitehall Rec will be putting on their very first Bark in the Park from 2pm to 4pm.

Whether you are a dog owner or just enjoy the company of our canine friends, go along for dog displays, a wide range of stalls and stands, and not to forget the Doggy Olympics! Another fund raising event planned for this year is their very first Bromley Beer Festival: On 27 June from 2pm-8pm you will be able to go along to sample the delights of real ale or Kent cider whilst the kids enjoy the climbing wall, bouncy castle and other fun entertainment, including a local magician.

Later in the year, on 21 July from 1.30pm–5pm, you can also look forward to their annual Fun Day, which they have organised for the past 9 years, then there’s their eighth Apple Day celebration on 11 October from 11am – 5pm: With local folk music, apple bobbing, autumn apple art, apple tasting, apple crushing for fresh apple juice, a ploughman’s lunch and even hot cider from the Kentish Cider Company, what more could you ask for on a fine October day!

2014 had proved to be the Friends of Whitehall’s most successful fundraising year to date, but with so much in store for this upcoming year, the group aims to surpass the amazing total of nearly £3,500 raised last year that they will to put towards new playground equipment. For further information please visit friendsofwhitehallrec.weebly.com.

www.bromley.gov.uk/volunteering
Representatives from groups across the borough were recently invited to the very first Bromley Tree Symposium. Attendees in the packed Council Chamber, were shown how they can help monitor and maintain the health of our 36,000 street trees by doing things like the cutting back of basal growth and the watering of young trees.

People who have subsequently registered to co-ordinate the Tree Friends in their Residents’ Association or community group will shortly be sent The Tree Friend Toolkit, an electronic resource that covers everything from how you can spot the harmful Oak Processionary Moth to how you can report a tree that looks diseased or dangerous.

To find out more about Tree Friends, please visit www.bromley.gov.uk/treefriends or ring 0300 303 8658.

The Friends of Hoblingwell invite you to join them for a Spring Walk around the historic Hoblingwell Woods with local wildlife experts on 21 May, followed by nibbles and a chat. Meet at 6.30pm at the Rugby Club, Leeson Way. Please respond to friendsofhoblingwell@hotmail.co.uk.

‘Pond for all Project’ needs your vote!

The ‘Pond for all Project’ in Hoblingwell Woods has been announced as a finalist in the Jewson’s Building Better Communities competition, and is now in with the chance of winning a share of a £100,000 fund. The ‘Pond for all Project’ is calling on local residents to vote for the project online before the closing date of 31 May.

Darren Russell, representative of the Friends of Hoblingwell, urges locals to get voting: “To have been nominated and shortlisted is a great achievement, but it’s important for people to get behind the project and vote so that we can secure the funds to do vital work in the community.

“We’ve been working on the pond for a few years now and we would like school parties, the local community and the disabled to have easy access to it by the installation of a boardwalk, for example.”

As part of its Building Better Communities project, Jewson asked communities to nominate a project to win a share of the £100,000, which could be spent on anything from a new roof on the village hall to a much needed coat of paint for a long-forgotten public space.

David Fenton, Marketing Director at Jewson said, “Throughout our 179 year history, we have played an active part in the communities in which we operate, but with Building Better Communities we’re taking that a step further by giving local people the support they need to make a genuine difference to where they live. Now the shortlist has been decided, residents within Hoblingwell Woods must get behind this project in order for them to win a share of the prize, helping to improve the community.”

To vote for the ‘Pond for All Project’ please visit: www.buildingbettercommunities.co.uk
Time for a spring clean

From litter picking and graffiti removal, to weeding and the cutting back of overgrown vegetation, teams of volunteers really are making a positive impact to their neighbourhoods via The Big Bromley Brush Up Campaign.

More and more residents, from youngsters to senior citizens, are getting together with the Council’s Street Environment Team to help improve their neighbourhoods.

Over the past few months, clean-ups have been arranged in Petts Wood and Mottingham, and most recently, on 5 May the Council worked in partnership with McDonalds and local volunteers tidying up in and around Broomwood Road, Orpington.

Like minded residents in Kenilworth Road and Owen Walk in Penge will soon be jumping to action to improve their streets, and a large number of volunteers from Christ Church, Anerley have also planned several clean-ups over the coming months.

So how about getting together with your own neighbours to arrange a clean-up yourself, or join us at any of the clean-ups listed below.

To register your interest, please complete the form at www.bromley.gov.uk/BigBromleyBrushUpForm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Clean-up</th>
<th>Meeting time</th>
<th>Meeting place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>Chislehurst clean-up</td>
<td>10.00am</td>
<td>Red Cross car park High Street, Chislehurst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 25</td>
<td>Mottingham clean-up</td>
<td>11.00am</td>
<td>Geffery’s Hall Community Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28</td>
<td>Petts Wood clean-up</td>
<td>11.30am</td>
<td>West Approach by recycling banks next to Morrison’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 26</td>
<td>Chislehurst clean-up</td>
<td>10.00am</td>
<td>Red Cross car park High Street, Chislehurst</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>Mottingham clean-up</td>
<td>11.00am</td>
<td>Geffery’s Hall Community Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Chislehurst clean-up</td>
<td>10.00am</td>
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</tbody>
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Graff off

Graffiti visible in public places, that once blighted our borough, has steadily declined over the past few years. This is thanks, in part, to its quick removal by hundreds of our dedicated Street Friends.

We acknowledge that now is not the time to become complacent about this anti-social problem, and would like to remind residents that we are able to supply paint and graffiti kits free of charge to our volunteers.

If you would like to assist in removing graffiti please join our army of Street Friends by completing the form at www.bromley.gov.uk/volunteering or ring 0300 303 8658.
The Friends of Well Wood Group and Bromley Council secured external funding to commission the very talented chainsaw artist, Will Lee, who works all over the country, Europe and America.

Utilising the sweet chestnut coppice, Will has created some spectacular benches for Well Wood including the ‘Squirrel’, ‘Owl’ and ‘Bear’ benches. Two special benches have also been created in memory of Dorothy Thorn and Mark Lee, who both tragically died from cancer far too young.

Dorothy Thorn was a founding member of the Friends of Well Wood Group. Dorothy’s ‘Twilight Bench’ signifies the evening walks she loved and the wildlife regularly observed at this time including badgers, bats, moths and spiders!

Mark Lee was the husband of Community Forester Pherenice Worsley-Buck, who has spent many years working with the Friends Group to improve the woodland. His ‘Oak Bench’ signifies his favourite tree, with the two acorns representing his little boys Isaac and Tyler.

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Friends Forum Conference

The Friends Forum of Bromley Parks and Green Spaces will be holding their second annual conference at the Civic Centre from 10am to 4pm on Tuesday 9 June. Lunch will be provided and drinks and nibbles will be served at the end of the day.

The agenda will include formal Forum business; a keynote speech from Dave Morris, Chair of the London wide Friends Group network; break-out workshop activities on subjects such as biodiversity, social media, park charitable status and succession planning; and a discussion session from members of the Council and The Landscape Group, who will outline their plan for managing the parks service over the coming years.

Guests will include Tony Leach, Chief Executive, London Parks & Green Spaces Forum; Nick Temple-Head, Chief Executive Officer, The Landscape Group; Councillor Colin Smith, Portfolio Holder for the Environment; and other key personnel from the Council and the Landscape Group.

The conference is open to all Friends Groups in Bromley and is free of charge.

For further details, please visit the Forum website at bromleyfriendsforum.org or email the forum at bromleyfriendsforum@outlook.com.