

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

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EARLY DAYS AS THE NEW LESNES LODGE OPENS

Building work on the new Lesnes Lodge in Abbey Wood has finished and it will now start to be occupied.

Landscaping directly around the building is almost complete, and other than some minor snagging work, good progress is being made towards getting the building fully operational. Some members of the community have already indicated that they would like to use the building and discussions with them are underway.

Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Environment and Leisure, Cllr Peter Craske, welcomed the news: "The new Lesnes Lodge is a stunning building and now that the construction work is finished we want local people to get involved and to come and talk to us about using it. We want it to become a real community hub."

The new building has a small outdoor area for alfresco activities and is a mere 5 minute walk from Abbey Wood Station. It is perfect for classes, courses, seminars, children's birthdays and a variety of other events. Concessionary rates are available for community groups.

A school group will be one of the first visitors to make use of the new building. Given the popularity of recent events at Lesnes Abbey, which have included a fossil hunt and a Halloween Bat Walk, demand is sure to be high in the future.

The Heritage Lottery Fund supported Estates Manager, Ian Holt, and Partnership Manager, Tom Smith, are developing a volunteer and site event programme and would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in using and supporting the site. Please email thomas.smith2@bexley.gov.uk

The £4.2m Lesnes Abbey Woods enhancement project is funded by the London Borough of Bexley and the Heritage Lottery Fund (which is investing £3.5m). Work started at the end of 2014 and other improvements, now complete, include a new trim trail, outdoor gym, table tennis and picnic tables, several outdoor learning experiences such as a heathland classroom and a Monk's Garden. A new parkour zone and pump track have also been added and the recreation area and children's playground have been improved.

You can find out more information on the improvements at Lesnes Abbey Woods at

www.visitlesnes.co.uk

Ends

- At 88 hectares, Lesnes Abbey Woods is the second largest park in the London Borough of Bexley. It is a site of metropolitan importance for nature conservation, a nature reserve and metropolitan open land. The Abbey ruins are a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and Grade II listed. The site is also a key area within South East London's Green Chain.



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