

FRIENDS OF FOOTS CRAY MEADOWS



SPECIAL ISSUE

NEWSLETTER

December 2013

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Budget Consultation

The FRIENDS OF FOOTS CRAY MEADOWS Committee has been advised of proposals by the Council to make cuts to the Parks and Open Spaces Budget for NEXT YEAR AND POSSIBLY BEYOND. This will have a major impact on the upkeep of the Meadows.

As a Friends Group we are focusing on Foothills Cray Meadows, although other parks and open spaces in the Borough will also be affected by these cuts. Local residents in the Borough will feel the affects of any cuts and we would request your immediate support to respond to the Council with your comments.

“What you can do”

The Friends Group implores you to act now; **the Council deadline is 18th December for replies**. The Council will undoubtedly assume no response equals an agreement to their cuts, so please ****ACT NOW**** and put your views across.

“How you put over your views to the proposed cuts”

This can be done by either completing a form available in your local library or completing the survey on-line on the [Bexley.gov.uk](http://www.bexley.gov.uk) website. You can find the details at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bexleybudget2014>
<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=16842>

“What is the Council proposing”

**Revising the frequency of cleaning in parks, including the emptying of dog bins.
The withdrawal of funding for parks “Friends and Volunteers” many of whom are actively helping to maintain our open spaces**

General reduction in reactive work - dealing with ad hoc repairs and maintenance, this includes vandalism.

We consider a reduction in this area will promote further vandalism. Over time families, dog walkers and individuals will be discouraged from using the meadows - as it will feel less safe and less attractive to visit. The greater the reduction in genuine users of a park often attracts the more unsuitable visitors, coupled with antisocial behavior and vandalism; this will dissuade even more regular people from using the parks, as vandalism breeds vandalism.

Cancellation of new street planting programmed Review fees and charges to move closer towards a cost neutral allotment service - Allotment charges would ultimately increase.

Withdrawal of free arboricultural advisory service for schools - Schools will need to buy in this advice, in the same way they buy in other services.

“And finally...”

Our Borough’s parks and open spaces are probably one of the most (if not the most) cost efficient services provided by the Council. Parks and open spaces are open to all and open all days of the year. Cost per head of population is pennies and **only around £2 per Council tax payer**, in addition to the fantastic value for money they are for delivering basic park functions, parks can and do provide so much more.

Thank you for your support. We appreciate you have plenty to do this time of year.