



## Immediate Release

### Greening Eltham Estates

A community greening project to improve the outdoor environment for residents

Project planned to improve the outdoor spaces on the Restons Crescent, Bexley Road and Wooton House, which are on the Avery Hill estate, Eltham.

Trees for Cities has been liaising with Councillor Matt Clare and the Royal Borough of Greenwich to identify potential green infrastructure projects that could improve local community spaces. They identified locations around housing where residents are keen to see greener community spaces. At the moment some estates have very few trees or planted areas.

There is the potential to transform areas of bare mown grass into areas that residents can use and enjoy, and which benefit the environment by helping to reduce the risk of flooding.

Trees for Cities is working in partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the Greater London Authority and the London Tree Officers Association on the estate greening project which will take place in March and April 2016. Trees for Cities will engage local residents to plant trees, shrubs and hedgerows to soften the harsh view of fencing between the estates, and to plant 20 trees which will enhance the outdoor environment and also provide some privacy for residents. This project has wider aims to plant a legacy of trees as part of the borough's green infrastructure programme.

Trees for Cities is organising a community planting day event on Saturday 2 April in Restons Crescent, where the local community and residents will be invited to come together and get actively involved in planting the trees. Earlier that week, a group of employees from the knowledge and events company, Informa, will be helping to enhance the green space in front of Wooton House, by planting small trees and shrubs.

Local residents and Councillors have also raised concerns with Trees for Cities that several of the existing trees in the area have been damaged by dogs. The charity are keen to raise awareness that when dogs strip bark from trees or chew tree branches it can cause trees to die. The London Tree Officers Association found that dog damage to trees in London cost over £1 million over a 12 month period. In April 2016, it will become law to micro chip and tag all dogs.

**David Elliott, Chief Executive of Trees for Cities, said** "We are holding a community tree planting day on 2 April where all residents can get digging and help improve their area. We'll also explain about the problem of dog damage to trees, how much it costs to replace them and what we can all do to help plant and protect trees so that we can improve Eltham's environment now and for the future".

**Cllr Matt Clare said,** "There is no denying the importance of trees to our urban environment. Trees clean our air and help cool it on hot summer days and can improve our health and happiness. We are delighted to be working with our partners on this project, to plant trees in estates to improve the outdoor environment for residents. What a wonderful legacy to be able to leave on the city".



**Trees for Cities**

**Matthew Pencharz, Deputy Mayor for Environment & Energy** said, “The Greater London Authority has delivered over 100,000 new trees in the capital over the last eight years, and by investing in this project to plant trees in estates and improve outdoor spaces for residents the local community will have beautiful green spaces for decades to come.”

This project has also been kindly supported by The Goldsmiths’ Company.

**Notes to Editors - Media Contacts:**

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**Trees for Cities** is the only independent charity working on a global scale focussed entirely on planting urban trees, inspiring children to grow and eat good food and providing volunteering opportunities to bring local people together. Since our inception, we have engaged over 70,000 people to plant 575,000 trees focusing on health, food security, environmental protection, and providing opportunities for education and learning through our Edible Playground and Urban Forest programmes. Our vision to plant trees in cities is global. However, we know the importance of a local focus – we empower and work with local people to strengthen their community. . ([www.treesforcities.org](http://www.treesforcities.org))

**LTOA:** The London Tree Officers Association have provided a leaflet giving information about dog damage to trees, which can be downloaded from their website: [http://www.ltoa.org.uk/component/docman/cat\\_view/103-dog-damage-to-trees](http://www.ltoa.org.uk/component/docman/cat_view/103-dog-damage-to-trees).

**The Greater London Authority (GLA)** has led a number of initiatives that aim to increase the number of trees in London. These include:

The Mayor’s Street Tree Initiative, delivered in partnership with the Forestry Commission saw 20,000 street trees planted across the capital.

RE:LEAF - a partnership to protect the capital's trees and encourage individual Londoners, businesses and organisations to plant more trees.

The London Tree and Woodland Community Grant Scheme (CGS) supports projects that promote or protect trees and woodlands and engage local communities.

The Big Green Fund is investing £3 million into improving 11 areas of London. This funding is being used to create high quality open spaces connecting town centers, public transport hubs, employment and residential areas with parks, open spaces and the Thames.

The Pocket Parks programme has provided £2m of funding to create 100 pocket parks - small areas of inviting public space for all people to enjoy, providing relief from the hustle and bustle of the city.

**[www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/trees-and-woodlands](http://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/trees-and-woodlands)**

**Royal Borough of Greenwich** - <http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/about>

**The Goldsmith company** - <http://www.thegoldsmiths.co.uk/charity-education/>

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