

## Winner of the RE:LEAF Community Award: The Friends of South Hill Wood and Kingswood Glen, Bromley

The award was given for a project that has been inspired, driven, and delivered by local community groups.

The Friends of South Hill Wood & Kingswood Glen clearly demonstrated community involvement in tackling challenging woodland issues, delivering practical management and demonstrating long term project sustainability



*The Friends of South Hill Wood & Kingswood Glen receiving the award from John Simpson, BBC World Affairs Editor and Matthew Pencharz, The Mayor of London Environment Advisor at the London Living Room, City Hall on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013*

Pherenice Worsley-Buck, Community Forester at London Borough of Bromley said:  
*"Community action and partnership working has reversed antisocial behaviour to create a woodland that the community can safely enjoy and feel proud of. We are thrilled to receive an award and hope this project inspires other community groups in London".*

### Transforming South Hill Wood

Antisocial behaviour such as drug taking, fly tipping and vandalism were sufficient reasons for a small group of concerned residents to form the Friends of South Hill Wood and Kingswood Glen in 2009 to reverse the decline and to reclaim the wood.

In partnership with Bromley Council and supported by the Big Lottery Fund Community Spaces Programme, a project to transform the wood involved woodland access improvements, wheel chair accessible paths, entrance and interpretation signs, seating, removal of invasive laurel, planting over 2000 native tree whips and 3000 native plants.

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*LBB Officer Andrew Wright demonstrating tree planting, the community planted 2,000 tree whips over 12 months!  
(Photo – Debra Peirce)*

A group constitution and bank account enabled the group to secure funding. Over 30 volunteers regularly attend the monthly practical conservation tasks including tree planting, litter collection, coppicing and selectively felling small trees, repairing infrastructure and undertaking woodland surveys. This is always followed by tea and biscuits!

A blue heritage plaque was successfully applied for to commemorate Sir Thomas Dewey, the previous owner and philanthropist.

The physical improvements were underpinned by a programme of environmental education and community building. The schools were involved in design competitions, environmental campaigns and helped to build the bird boxes. External funding supported Forest School training to empower teachers to continue using our wood as an outdoor classroom in the future.

A community woodland festival to celebrate project completion attracted over 400 local residents. They participated in environmental arts and crafts, wildlife walks, music, scavenger hunts, bird box making, art exhibitions, chainsaw sculptures and children’s entertainment. Promoting the positive use of the woods was an important element of our project. More residents using the wood results in problems being reported and resolved quickly.



*Children enjoying the community woodland festival  
(Photo - Mark Lee Photography)*

**Further information**

- Project information: [Pherenice.worsey-buck@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:Pherenice.worsey-buck@bromley.gov.uk)
- The [RE:LEAF Partnership](#)

The 2013 Awards were organised by the Forestry Commission and Mayor of London, received sponsorship from Gristwood & Toms, Woodland Trust and Barcham Trees, and had assistance from a range of RE:LEAF partners

