

London Borough of Bexley

News Release

For Immediate Release

10 November 2015 / PR 6248

NORTH HEATH & UPPER BELVEDERE LIBRARIES SET FOR PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT

Bexley's Cabinet Members are expected to agree the new arrangements for the community management of North Heath and Upper Belvedere Libraries, at its meeting next week (17 November).

It is proposed that from next April the libraries will be managed by Eco Communities, in partnership with Age UK Bexley and Woodlands Academy Trust.

Earlier this year the Council asked for community groups to come forward to help run four of the borough's libraries at Blackfen, Bostall, North Heath and Upper Belvedere. This followed the adoption of a new Library Strategy and a plan for the remodelling of the service.

Eco Communities are an experienced South London based organisation that already manages a number of libraries in Lewisham. The group also manage the Slade Green and Howbury Community Centre in Bexley.

Working with local partners Age UK Bexley and Woodlands Academy Trust, Eco Communities will bring the benefit of three experienced local service providers to managing libraries in Bexley.

Under the new management arrangements, the core services of the libraries will be enhanced by new facilities, including an expanded range of events and activities for children, families and older residents, and training opportunities for those seeking work. Membership of the libraries will continue to be free of charge.

Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Environment and Leisure, Cllr Peter Craske said; “The Eco Communities partnership with Age UK and Woodland Academy Trust will be the basis for exciting developments at these libraries.

Eco Communities and their partners have shown us that they are committed to delivering excellent libraries in North Heath and Upper Belvedere that will provide new and exciting services. I am confident that all members of the partnership will rise to the challenge of delivering community focussed libraries that meet the needs of local people.”

Bexley’s Cabinet will also look to agree community groups for the management of Blackfen and Bostall Libraries at their meeting on 17 November.

Over the coming months, the Council will work with the appointed operators to prepare their plans for all four libraries.

'ENDS'

**Please contact: Jane Parson on 020 3045 4868
communications@bexley.gov.uk**

