

Links Upstream & Downstream

There is an option to loop back to the River Crane from Isleworth through St Margarets and Twickenham via the Thames Path. From Kneller Gardens it is possible to follow the River Crane upstream on a continuous linear path through Crane Park, Pevensey Nature Reserve and Donkey Wood. There is a path for most of the route upstream to the source of the River Crane in Harrow.

Visit www.force.org.uk to download a map.



Painting on the front cover:
View of the mills at the Calico Grounds, Isleworth Watercolour, 1795
© British Library

To learn more about green spaces along the lower Duke of Northumberland's River and the River Crane please contact or visit:

FORCE
info@force.org.uk
www.force.org.uk

Crane Valley Partnership
cvp@greencorridor.org.uk
www.cranevalley.org.uk

Look out for other leaflets in this series:
Donkey Woods & Brazil Mill Woods
Crane Park to Hounslow Heath
Dragonfly Trail (Crane Park)
The Lower Crane Valley

The Duke's River Walk

The lower Duke of Northumberland's River flows for 4km from Kneller Gardens in Twickenham to the River Thames in Isleworth. The river was constructed in the sixteenth century to supply water to mills in Isleworth. Today the river is a tranquil green corridor through urban west London linking the River Crane to the River Thames.

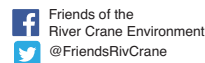


You can also follow the walk on your mobile device by downloading the TiCL app and searching for The Duke's River Walk.

The Duke's River Walk

Kneller Gardens to River Thames Isleworth

FORCE
Friends of the River Crane Environment

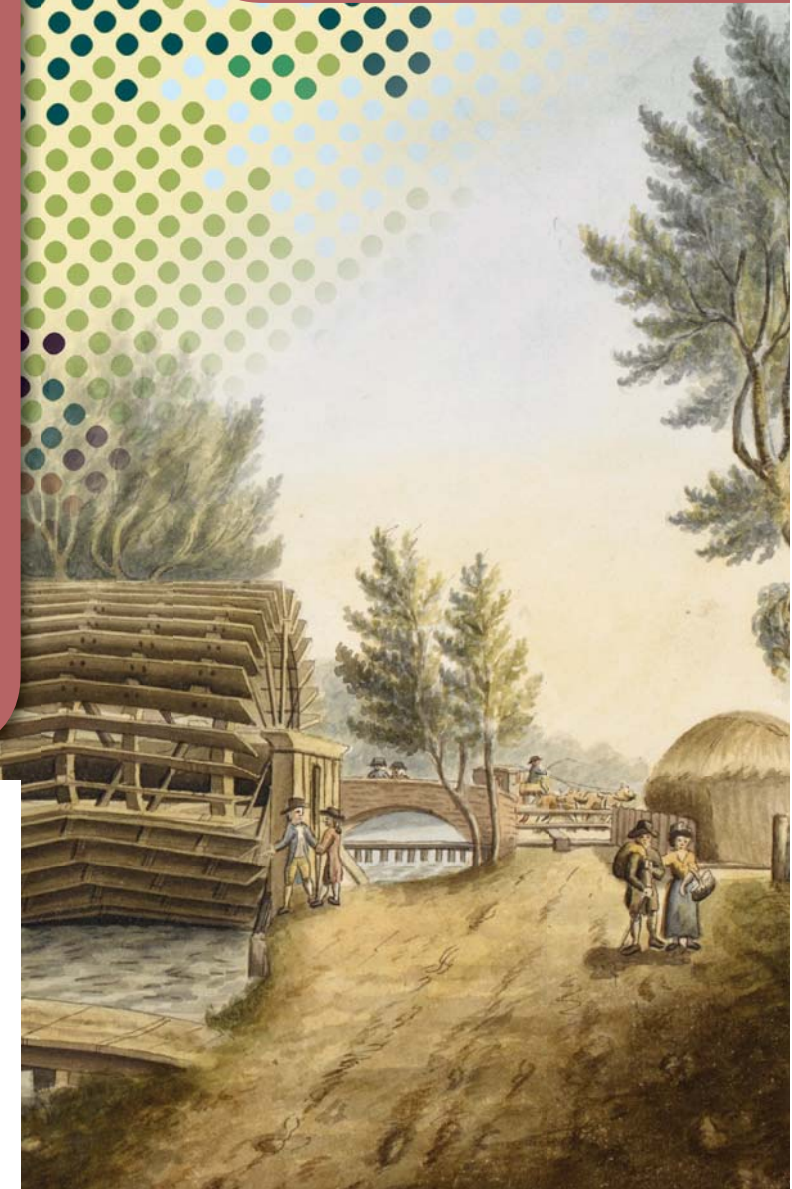


SUPPORTED BY

MAYOR OF LONDON

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design, photography & illustration - Paul Smith

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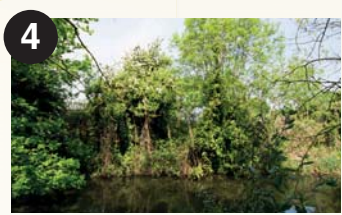
1 The River Crane
The River Crane, a tributary of the Thames, provides a green corridor of semi-natural habitats from its source (as the Yeading Brook) in Harrow to the Thames at Isleworth. It supports a wide variety of small mammals and birds including water voles, kingfishers and owls, as well as 15 species of fish.



2 Mereway Nature Park
This small area of mixed bramble scrub is a haven for wildlife. It is located at the divergence of the River Crane and the Duke of Northumberland's River, where there is a large weir which controls the flow between the two rivers. There is an outdoor classroom for use by schools on the site and the adjacent Kneller Gardens has refreshment facilities and public toilets.



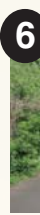
3 Rugby
Two rugby grounds can be seen from the river walk. Twickenham Stoop has been home to the Harlequin Rugby Football Club since 1963. Further downstream is Twickenham Stadium home of the Rugby Football Union and England's national rugby stadium. The first international match took place there in 1910.



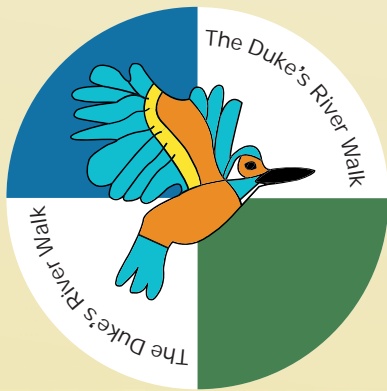
4 Whitton Brook
Whitton Brook is the historic administrative boundary between Isleworth and Twickenham. It is identified by a line of mature trees on the opposite bank to the path. Water voles can be found along this stretch of the river. They feed on bankside vegetation, and live in burrow systems excavated into the river bank, which include underwater entrances used as an escape route.



5 Mogden Sewage Treatment Works & Eel Pass
This is the second largest sewage treatment works in the UK, constructed in the 1930s and owned and operated by Thames Water. The site covers 55 hectares and serves over 2 million people. ZSL has been monitoring for eels in the River Crane since 2011, and an eel pass has been installed to aid the eels over the manmade barriers, such as the weir on this site, that inhibit their migration. In its first year of use over 600 eels were counted moving upstream via this pass.



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The Duke's River Walk

The Duke's River Walk kingfisher emblem was designed from drawings provided by children from Chase Bridge Primary School and Isleworth Town Primary School. It is used as a waymarker along the route of the walk.



- Public Toilets
- Play Area
- Café
- Pub
- Bus Stop
- National Rail



8 Silverhall Park
This park was part of the gardens for Silverhall House, which was demolished in the 1950s. Relics of the house include an ice house, gates and veteran trees. The main park is laid out for recreation and across the river is a further area managed principally for wildlife.



9 Mill Plat and Kidd's Mill
There is a substantial wall along the Mill Plat marking the boundary of Kidd's Flour Mill. Just before the river enters the River Thames there is a basin which was used to load barges with produce from the mills. An eel pass in the mill basin helps eels navigate upstream over the large manmade structures of Kidd's Sluice.



6 Mills
The river north of Worton Road is the site of two mills and a moated manor house which were still visible until the twentieth century. This natural looking section of the river has areas of mature willows, scrub and bankside vegetation, and provides good habitat for bats and nesting water birds.



7 Isleworth Brewery
This part of the river runs along the line of the old Hounslow Brook, the flow of which was augmented by the construction of the Duke's River. There was a brewery on this site from the eighteenth century, owned by the Farnell family. After 1866 it became the Isleworth Brewery and operated here until the 1980s. The river was heavily altered for industrial purposes, and in addition to the brewery provided power for copper mills, a paper mill and brazil (a red dye used for dyeing cloth) mill.

The History of the River

The manmade channel of the Lower Duke of Northumberland's River is part of a larger water transfer system that links the River Colne, the River Crane and the River Thames and was once known as the Isleworth Mill River. It was built in order to provide supplementary water to the mills along its length. Water is taken from the River Crane at the Mereway Weir, via this man made channel, to Isleworth, where it turns a sharp bend to meet the course of the old Hounslow Brook flowing into the River Thames.

The Duke's River was constructed in the mid-16th Century by John Gates, steward to the king for the Manor of Isleworth and the Isleworth mills. He made use of "80 of the best ditchers in England" to complete his project to bring additional water from the River Crane to the decayed mills in Isleworth.

Today Modgen Sewage Works, one of the largest in the country, can be found on the river. The river corridor has significant environmental value, and forms a tranquil green corridor through urban west London.



Mereway Nature Park & Kneller Gardens



Whitton Brook



water vole

The Ecology of the River

The rich variety of habitats makes the river attractive to a number of native species including water voles, several species of bat and kingfishers. Eels are found in the river, and two eel passes were installed at Mill Plat and Mogden Sewage Works, to aid their passage over manmade barriers and allow them easier access upstream.

Recent projects have improved the habitats along the river banks, for example by providing floating in-channel vegetation on rafts, planting new bankside vegetation and wild flowers, and building kingfisher nesting banks.

Industrial Heritage

The area has a rich industrial history linked closely to the river. In the area north of Worton Road there were two mills producing calico (a rough cotton sheet), one in operation until 1833. In St John's Road a mill, built in the sixteenth century, was variously used to produce paper (1607 and 1671), copper (1635), Brazil dye (1721) and finally flour, until it burnt down in 1862. The site was bought up by the expanding local Isleworth Brewery, which had been in operation on the river at least since the 18th Century. Old industrial structures linked to the mills and brewery remain visible along the river bank today.

Two mills were mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, and reported as in decay and disused by 1463. The mills were revived by the Duke's River, and by 1845 there was a large flour mill known as Kidd's Mill at the confluence with the Thames at Mill Plat. It was demolished in 1941. The mill was served by barges directly from the Thames, using a large basin and locks, and the basin is still there along with other remnant structures.



View of the Calico Grounds, Isleworth Watercolour, 1795 © British Library