



## Friends Of the River Crane Environment

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring 2009 edition of our newsletter. Apologies for not putting out a winter newsletter this year, but all Trustees were very busy running the **Priority Parks** campaign over the winter and, as we hope you all know already, these efforts have paid off. **Many thanks to all of you who voted**, and also helped to spread the word to your family, friends and neighbours. The competition and what happens next is covered further below.

This is annual **membership renewal** time for our members and renewal forms as well as Standing Order and Gift Aid forms have been included with this newsletter. Particular thanks to those of you who have completed Standing Order forms in previous years - hopefully the system has ensured you haven't received any reminders this time. Incidentally, getting on for half of our members currently pay by Standing Order and Gift Aid was worth almost five hundred pounds to us last year.

### Crane Park Vision

In April 2006 FORCE launched its vision for "A larger and better Crane Park for nature and for people". This vision is to expand and improve the existing park, creating a new park along the river linking Twickenham Station with Hounslow Heath.

In 2007 we **raised a total of £30,000**, with support from Hounslow and Richmond Councils, Wates Foundation and Awards for All, to undertake a **Feasibility Study** for this new park. An interim report was produced in June last year and is available on our web-site. It was at this time that we heard about the new London Mayor's Priority Parks competition and agreed with the two councils both to enter the competition and to delay completion of the final report until the result was known.

### Mayor's Priority Parks project

Some 47 parks from across London made the final of the competition and voting ran from late November to 30<sup>th</sup> January. Two winners were selected from each of five London regions and Crane Park not only won the south west region but, with **6677 votes, we polled more than any other London park**. Crane Park is therefore one of ten London parks that will each receive **£400,000** for improvements over the next two years.

So what happens next? The first thing to note is that the £400,000 does not come to FORCE (nor to either of the Councils straight away). It will be held by GLA and drawn down in response to specific project needs. There is already a Steering Group in place for the existing Crane Park project and we met recently to discuss the likely approach. FORCE is keen to spend the first three months liaising with all interested parties, including our members and the general public, to collate ideas and suggestions before developing a strategy for the next two years. More information on how this will work in practice will be provided to our members in the next month or so. We are of course hopeful that this funding will go some considerable way to delivering the "Crane Park vision".

### Volunteer Days

In the meantime our monthly volunteer days are continuing. Late last year we completed construction of our first artificial **kingfisher nesting bank** on the Crane, with expert support from Ian McKinnon of London Wildlife Trust. We now wait to see if the kingfishers will move in.

Some of you may also have seen the hedge we have been planting along the long northern boundary of Crane Park between Meadway and Hospital Bridge Road. We have surprised ourselves by planting over **500 metres of hedging** so far this year, with considerable help from BTCV and the Community Payback Scheme. Local traditional apple, pear, cherry and cob nut trees have been planted at 25 metre intervals alongside the hedge – we shall be going back to finish off the work next winter.

This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



### Mayday Genealogy

Family History & Genealogy Research Services  
89 Third Cross Road, TWICKENHAM, TW2 5DY  
Telephone: 020 8894 0488  
Info@maydaygenealogy.co.uk  
www.maydaygenealogy.co.uk

© Copyright Friends Of the River Crane Environment  
FORCE is a registered charity No.: 1108542  
Website: [www.force.org.uk](http://www.force.org.uk)  
E-mail: [info@force.org.uk](mailto:info@force.org.uk)



## Friends Of the River Crane Environment

Our final volunteer day of the season is on **Sunday 10th May** when we shall be working on the Hounslow side of Crane Park for the first time, removing rubbish and creating pathways through this lovely but neglected part of the park alongside residents from Butts Farm Estate.

### Kneller Gardens

The project to **renovate the pavilion** in Kneller Gardens is moving forwards; planning permission has been granted and the work is expected to take place this summer. New changing rooms will be created alongside public toilets and a small café.

In the same time period a **new cycle route** will be provided across Kneller Gardens, including a new bridge across the Duke of Northumberland's River linking Kneller with Mereway Nature Park. FORCE has recently responded to the consultation on this project.

### Other local developments

FORCE is tracking various development proposals local to the Crane in both Hounslow and Richmond boroughs. Thames Water is moving forward with its proposals to increase storm water storage at Mogden Sewage Works. **Improvement works along the Duke of Northumberland's River** are proposed as part of these works and FORCE will be involved in developing these proposals.

The proposals by BAA and Network Rail to construct a new railway yard on the old Feltham marshalling yards site – now a site of London wide nature importance – has been through a public consultation exercise – our response can be seen on the web-site. A Public Inquiry on this site is expected at the end of this year.

FORCE is also tracking possible developments at Richmond College, Twickenham Station, the Post office site and Greggs among others. The current economic climate may impact on some or all of these moving forwards in the short term.

### Summer Events

FORCE will have a stand at the **May Fair on Twickenham Green** on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May. We also hope to hold one or more events related to the Priority Parks project and will let you know as soon as these are finalised.

The Annual **FORCE Open Day** will be held on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September. As usual we are proposing a community based event with many of the familiar attractions from previous years – Kneller Gardens dog show, beer tent, rifle range, story teller, Marsh Farm produce tasting etc. We are also happy to consider suggestions from any of our members for additional features you may think appropriate to the event. Offers of help in preparation and on the day will be gratefully received.

In all these projects and activities we benefit enormously from your membership and support and we hope you will be renewing this for another year,

Kind regards,  
Rob Gray (Chair of FORCE)

