



Friends Of the River Crane Environment

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our spring 2010 newsletter. Those of you who live and walk locally will not be surprised to read that there is a lot going on in the Crane valley at present. We believe that much of this work will have positive results, although the disruption at various sites up and down the river can be unsettling. This newsletter lets you know what we know about these projects

This is annual renewal time for our members and, if you are member, then renewal forms as well as Standing Order and Gift Aid forms should be included with this newsletter. Around half of our members already pay by Standing Order and the **Gift Aid** was worth around £400 to us last year. We are very pleased that our membership renewal rate in previous years has been over 85% and we continue to have **over 400 members** - this provides encouragement we are doing things our members want to support.

#### Crane Valley Park

The consultation for the mayor's **priority parks project** was very successful with over 250 responses. The project steering group has reviewed these and is using them to inform the project design. More details on the results of the consultation can be found at [www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk) We shall also in due course post the results on our web-site, although we are having problems loading information there at present.

We are hopeful that several components of the project will start to be implemented in the next few months, including a **new cycle path** through the Hounslow side of Crane Park and improvements to the entrances in both boroughs.

In the mean time, the Greater London Authority (GLA) has announced consultation on the **“All London Green Grid”**. This will extend the East London green grid to West London and should see GLA support and investment for improved linkages along the Crane valley, as one of the major green corridors for West London. FORCE Trustees also recently attended a one-day seminar for the Wandle Valley Regional Park in south London. The River Wandle corridor has many similarities with the Crane valley and we plan to develop our existing links with the Wandle Trust and others so we continue to learn from each other.

#### My River Crane – Exhibition

This exhibition was launched at Crane Park School on 15<sup>th</sup> March by the leaders of Richmond and Hounslow councils and is on tour until October. It will be at Heathfield Library in May, Hounslow central library in June, Trafalgar School and the Crane Park shot tower in July and Twickenham library in August.

There is also an **online exhibition** where everyone can upload their own photos and images of the Crane valley. Find it at [www.flickr.com/groups/myrivercrane/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/myrivercrane/) or email images to [myrivercrane@force.org.uk](mailto:myrivercrane@force.org.uk) . We will select some of the best images for a final week's exhibition at Orleans Gallery in Twickenham in October.

#### Hospital Bridge Road

This is one of three areas where there is a lot going on at present. The Whitton School playing fields work is now largely completed. We have worked with the council to try to ensure the flood lights do not spill light into the river corridor and the council are due to let us see the results of their testing in the near future. There is also a problem with flooding of the parkland in this area that the council is investigating. We are planning to create new wetland areas in some of the wetter patches of grassland and are working with the council to achieve this.

We were very disappointed that the old multi-stemmed willow had to be cut back by the council recently due to disease. We persuaded the council to leave the tree stumps in place and we hope to create something of value with these in agreement with the Council.

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

Richmond council is also currently developing **wildflower meadows**, both in this area and on the other side of the road bridge. The first task is to kill off the grass and, although this looks unsightly for a short while, it should be replaced in a few months by meadows of wild flowers.

### Kneller Gardens

The new **play area** opened in April and is proving popular with children of all ages. The work on the **pavilion** at Kneller Gardens, although largely finished, has been delayed, due to problems with sewerage services, but the council remains hopeful it will open this summer. In the mean time **Richmond Youth Partnership (RYP)**, who will be running the kiosk, have started to run **skate boarding sessions** in the park every other Saturday. RYP will provide tutors, helmets, pads and supervision. Young people will need to bring boards/skates/scooters and any snacks and/or drinks. Sessions run from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm on Saturday afternoons weather permitting and the next one will be held on Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

We remain in discussion with the council regarding the new power cables being installed by EDF, that have seen excavations and road track laid in both Kneller Gardens and Crane Park. Unfortunately, we now understand that EDF want to do more work in these spaces both this summer and next. We are not happy with this and have asked the council to push for some mitigation. In particular, we have asked EDF to remove the two unsightly cable bridges (crossing the Duke of Northumberland's River and the underpass at Mereway Nature Park) that are now redundant but the company were proposing to leave in place. We have also requested funds from EDF for the renovation of the old white footbridge that gives access to Kneller Gardens.

### Duke of Northumberland's River

This is an artificial channel, constructed in the 1500's, that links the River Crane at Kneller Gardens with the River Thames at Isleworth. The footpath alongside it is of great value as a link between the Crane valley and the River Thames, but is currently in poor condition. In addition, there is very little known locally about the history of this channel or its great environmental value.

We are hopeful that development projects in both Hounslow and Richmond will provide investment for better public access and other improvements along the river and we shall be pushing for a co-ordinated effort between the two councils to move this forwards.

### Volunteer Days

FORCE, along with Environment Trust for Richmond and BTCV, held a series of volunteer days in March that helped to largely complete one thousand metres of hedge in Crane Park and Kneller Gardens. One of these was an educational event with around **120 children from Whitton School** where they planted around 100 metres of hedge in Kneller Gardens along the boundary with the railway.

The next and final volunteer day for this season was held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May at Mereway Nature Park. We are now resting over the summer until Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October.

Finally, we would like to remind all our members that the eighth annual **FORCE Open Day** will be held on the afternoon of Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. All the usual events will be there, starting with the dog show at Kneller Gardens at 1:30 pm, and everyone, as always, is welcome. All offers of help either beforehand or on the day will be readily accepted.

Kind regards,

Rob Gray, Chair, on behalf of FORCE

