

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our autumn 2015 newsletter, where we set out our new season of volunteer days, announce details of a new "Green Gym" for Richmond and provide updates on major ongoing projects.

FORCE AGM

The FORCE AGM has been re-scheduled for Wednesday 25th November at "The Twickenham Club" in Church St, Twickenham, starting at 8pm. After formal business, Bob Barton (Chair of the Friends of Cranford Park), will give an introduction to this remarkable historical site in the middle of the Crane catchment.

Launch of the New Web-site

Trustees have been working over the last year developing a new web-site to be launched this month. Please have a look and give us your feedback www.force.org.uk

New Season of Volunteer Days

The new season of FORCE volunteer days is listed at the end of this newsletter. Our first day was held at Twickenham Rifle Club on 11th October, maintaining and improving the habitats there and in the adjacent Cranford Fields – including the planting of half a dozen trees.

The ongoing programme will take us to places we have worked before and will also allow us to engage at a hands-on level with the new projects we are helping to deliver.

Crane Park Usage Surveys

The next "Usage Survey" -- our fourth annual January survey -- will take place on Sunday 17th January 2016 at both the Dragonfly Terrace and the Meadway entrance to Crane Park, between 8.00am and 4.00pm and we are looking for volunteers to help. Counting those using the park is a simple process, and we give full instructions to our volunteers. The information that you help to generate through these surveys proves invaluable in our discussions with council officials and developers and helps to fund improvements in the Crane Valley. If you can spare an hour or two on this date please contact info@force.org.uk -- we'd love to hear from you.

The intention is for this project to provide cumulative improvements to these local open spaces, whilst also engaging local people with gentle and sociable outdoor activities to benefit their health and general well-being.

Ongoing Work at Mill Road

The work to improve the wildlife value of the River Crane at Mill Road is continuing with the removal of around 200 metres of toe boards from the southern river bank to allow a more natural bank-side habitat to develop. TCV are leading on this work and FORCE will have its own volunteer day there on 8th November.

We have also been developing new information boards for the Mill Road site which detail its history and environmental value. These will be installed in the next few months in parallel with a project to engage a local school. We plan for the school to help lead one of our walk and talk sessions there over the next few months.



This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



Mayday Genealogy

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Richmond Green Gym

We are delighted to announce that TCV will be starting "Richmond Green Gym" in January 2016. This will be preceded by taster sessions on 25th November, 2nd December and 9th December, meeting at 10.45am at Kneller Gardens Café. The Green Gym is a weekly half day volunteering event with an emphasis on healthy living. FORCE and LB Richmond are supporting this initiative, which will operate in Mereway Nature Park and Meadway Orchard every Wednesday morning. This follows the success of the Hounslow Green Gym in Pevensey Road Nature Reserve (the other side of Hanworth Road from Crane Park) which has been running every Monday morning over the last 12 months. Anyone can attend without a prior booking; and the project will also offer referrals from local GPs.

Walks and Talks and Community Learning

Following last year's successful initiative we have received funding from the Heathrow Communities Fund to run a second programme of "community learning" events, in partnership with TCV. This will include training in hedge laying, marginal planting and meadow scything.

Over the winter we will be leading a series of three walks going from the Thames confluence in Isleworth to the source at Headstone Manor in Harrow. Details of how to get involved and the dates of the events will follow in the next Newsletter and be promoted on our web-site and Facebook page.

Duke's River Project

The first part of this project is almost complete: TCV have spent around 20 days clearing up to 20 tonnes of accumulated rubbish from the river (see picture from Riverside Walk in Isleworth) and the planning for the main project works is in place.

These works will start on site in early November with the removal of fencing, widening of the corridor and creation of improved pathways and environmental features between Kneller Gardens and the A316.

We are also delighted to announce that volunteers, monitoring the eel pass at Mogden, have recorded over 600 young eels (or elvers) entering the river system through this structure over its first season of operation.

Citizen Crane

This Citizen Science project has been monitoring the invertebrate life and water chemistry of the river every month at 12 locations for the last year and a half, and a report on the first year's work can be found on the CVP web-site www.cranevalley.org.uk

The project is working closely with the Environment Agency and Thames Water to better understand the water quality of the river and its chronic pollution problems, prioritise actions to combat them and help ensure these actions are cost effective. A significant aspect of the pollution problem is domestic "misconnections", whereby household plumbing errors lead to waste water going directly into the river. Some 5 per cent of London's housing stock has this problem and recent Thames Water investigations near Crane Park have found misconnected basins, showers, washing machines as well as toilets. More information on the misconnections issue, and what individual home owners can do, can be found at www.connectright.org.uk



Closure of old FORCE Bank Account

FORCE will soon be closing its old Santander Bank account. If you pay your membership subscription by standing order, please check that it is being paid into the new Co-Operative Bank account. If it is not you will need to modify the standing order so that it is paid to **Co-Operative Bank**; Sort Code: **08-92-99**; Account Number: **65691959**. The amount of the payment, and the payment reference should remain the same. The payment should be made **annually on 6th April**.

We are grateful to all our members for their continued support and we look forward to meeting you at one or more of our events over the coming season. More details on all our events and projects are on our new web-site. Regular updates and reports on activities, as well as observations and comments from local people, can be found on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/friendsrivercrane

If you would like to become more involved in any aspect of our work then please do not hesitate to get in touch. We now have eight work portfolios; ranging from education, community, communications and wildlife; to planning, finance, membership and volunteering; each with a Trustee leading a small volunteer team. Portfolio leads would be pleased to meet with members to discuss opportunities and how you may become involved. In the first instance please drop a line to info@force.org.uk indicating your interests and any relevant experience,

Regards,

Rob Gray,

Chair of FORCE



The poster features a green background with silhouettes of people exercising (one running, one stretching) and various nature elements like butterflies, birds, and flowers. The text is in bold, colorful fonts.

TCV
The Conservation Volunteers

GREEN GYM[®]

in Richmond

Wednesdays from 10:45am to 2pm
Meeting KG Café in Kneller Gardens,
Meadway, TW2 6PH

Join in, feel good

From sowing meadows to planting trees, we have practical conservation tasks running every week to help you get active and improve your local green spaces.
All are welcome and sessions are free

For more information, contact Nadia on 07801686014 or gg-richmond@tcv.org.uk @RichmondTCV www.tcv.org.uk/richmondgreengym

FORCE
Friends of the River Crane Environment

Heathrow Community Fund
Part of BAA Communities Trust

R LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

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FORCE Volunteer Days and Activity Programme

Date	Location	Activities
8 th November*	Mill Road, Crane Park 10-30am start	Toe board removal and marginal planting plus pathway and wetland scrape maintenance
25 th November	Twickenham Club Church St Twickenham 8pm start	FORCE AGM. Formal business will be followed by a talk from Bob Barton, Chair of the Friends of Cranford Park
13 th December*	Crane Park west Meet at the Tower 10-30am start	Pollarding the osiers on the island followed by maintenance works on the remnant structures associated with the gunpowder works
10 th January 2016*	Willow Way, newly opened space in Crane Park 10-30am start	Marginal planting, removing ivy from fruit trees and path maintenance
17 th January	Dragonfly Terrace and Meadway entrance to Crane Park, 8.00am - 4.00pm	Crane Park Usage Survey
14 th February*	Crane Park, Meadway entrance 10-30am start	Maintenance of the hedge, including new planting for any gaps
13 th March*	Crane Park, Dragonfly Terrace 10-30am start	Maintenance of this part of Crane Park
10 th April*	Little Park and Pevensey, across Hanworth Rd from Crane Park 10-30am start	Development of paths to link the two sides of the river - following bridge installation scheduled for the new year
8 th May*	Mill Road, Crane Park 10-30am start	Removal of toe boards and marginal planting
12 th June*	Hospital Bridge Road entrance to Crane Park 10.30am start	Balsam bash

*FORCE volunteer events start at 10-30am; join us for an hour or the whole day. Hot drinks are provided but bring a packed lunch if staying the day. Please wear stout shoes or boots and old clothes. Children under 16 are welcome but must be accompanied at all times by a responsible adult