

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the fiftieth edition of our seasonal newsletter, first produced in 2003. The spring edition marks the time for membership renewals. Many of you renew by standing order whilst those doing so manually should have a renewal form with this newsletter. Last year we changed bank accounts – and some of you will receive a letter if your standing order was still going to the old account.

Membership numbers have remained stable at just over 500 for the last few years and we are very grateful for your continued support. Our members are hugely important to us. You provide us with:- feedback on our projects, support for our volunteer activities, legitimacy in discussions with councils and developers, as well as essential core funding.

We therefore hope you will renew, as an active contribution to the maintenance and improvement of the River Crane corridor. We would also be very grateful if you could engage with friends, neighbours and family, indeed all those who might benefit from the work we are doing, to see if they would like to join. The more members we have the more we can achieve, as volunteers, to improve the value of our local environment.

### Duke's River Project

We are very active on this project, producing a guided leaflet and signage to help local people explore the Duke's River walk, supporting initiatives like the pathways improvements between Kneller and Chase Bridge, as well as new marginal wetlands just upstream from Chase Bridge School.

The main GLA funded period is now coming to a close but the project will continue, funded through local programmes, over the next 12 months. The new riverside path by Harlequins has already proved very popular, with usage up significantly. by at least an order of magnitude. The path along Riverside Walk has also been resurfaced, and we are currently working with two local schools to design a distinctive emblem for the walk that will be included in all publications and on the way markers.



This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



### Mayday Genealogy

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### Hounslow Heath

FORCE worked together with other local groups to challenge the proposal to re-develop Hounslow Heath Golf Club as a commercial adventure park. This proposal was rejected at the planning committee in March and we believe there is now a unique opportunity for Hounslow council to work together with local groups to produce a management plan that preserves and enhances the value of both the Heath and the Crane corridor through this site.

### Citizen Crane



This innovative citizen science project is continuing to improve our understanding of the water quality in the river. It has received funding for a third year from the Thames Water Fund with one of our partners, ZSL, taking on the project management. In addition to the regular monthly monitoring of the river condition at 12 sites, we have begun this May by carrying out the first volunteer led "outfall safari" of the river. This will use a newly created "app" to assess the condition of 150 surface water outfalls, then use this information to help quantify their contribution to pollution problems and thereby prioritise intervention measures by Thames Water.

We are also working with ZSL to monitor the influx of eels into the catchment, using two newly installed eel passes. In 2015, their first year of operation, we counted over 600 eels using these passes to come into the Crane. Those interested in being involved in these projects please contact [joe.pecorelli@zsl.org](mailto:joe.pecorelli@zsl.org)

### Brewery Wharf and Twickenham Station

Both of these Twickenham based development projects are committed to delivering improvements in environmental value and community access along the River Crane. There have though been delays in the delivery of both projects and latest estimates are that the new pathway through the Wharf site will be in place by September this year with the station improvements due in 2018.

### Volunteer Days

Our FORCE season is now almost over, with the final event before the summer break being the "big balsam bash" near Hospital Bridge Road in Crane Park on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

There is plenty of other volunteering activity along the Crane though. In partnership with FORCE, and through a learning programme funded by Heathrow Community Fund, The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) are holding a series of training sessions, culminating in a meadow scything course in July.

The Hounslow and Richmond Green Gyms, meeting at Pevensy Nature Reserve and Kneller Gardens on Mondays and Wednesdays respectively, also continue to go well. These sessions run from 10-45am to 2pm and are designed to provide key health benefits with links to the boroughs' wider health programmes, and all are welcome. A third green gym is now proposed for Friday's on Hounslow Heath. More information from Nadia on 07801 686014.





### Other Activities

We have started, in partnership with London Wildlife Trust, a major 12 month programme of walks and talks along the River Crane and Duke's River corridors. The events, lasting around 90 minutes, are designed to introduce people to a key feature of the river corridor, its wildlife and/or history, engaging a new audience and promoting the value of these local assets.



Events over the next six months are included in this newsletter programme and the full list will be available on our web-site. All the events are free but booking is required, either through [www.force.org.uk](http://www.force.org.uk) where you will find a link to Eventbrite or by e-mailing [info@force.org.uk](mailto:info@force.org.uk)

FORCE will be attending the HANDS May Fair on Twickenham Green on 30<sup>th</sup> May. We shall be showcasing a new exhibition about the history of the mill and Fulwell Lodge at Mill Road. This was a project working in association with Year 6 children from Trafalgar School. Later in the summer this exhibition will go to the the Trafalgar School Fair and Twickenham Museum. Children from Year 6 will be leading a walk on the site on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

We have recently installed new interpretation in the Mill Road area of Crane Park which highlights the history and ecology of the site. You can find five information boards along the back channel of the river between Mill Road and Hospital Bridge Road with a further larger board on the corner of Hospital Bridge Road and the Chertsey Road. We are grateful to Richmond Civic Trust for funding this project.

FORCE will be holding our fifth annual park usage surveys on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at the Meadway entrance to Crane Park, and the Dragonfly Terrace, between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. If you can spare an hour or two to help with the surveys at either location you will be most welcome. The counting is very straightforward, full instructions are given, and help is always on hand. The usage surveys are very important in

helping us to understand how the local community is using its open spaces, and in helping us to build the case for more investment in our open spaces. Please contact [info@force.org.uk](mailto:info@force.org.uk) if you are interested in helping.

Finally, we shall be joining the Friends of Kneller Gardens for their annual dog show on 11<sup>th</sup> September – which will also feature the annual duck race.

### Looking for Volunteers

We are continuing to expand the scope and scale of the work we are delivering and we are very dependent upon volunteers to deliver our projects. We are therefore always interested in people willing to become more involved in their local spaces and welcome enquiries from anyone curious to find out more. We currently have particular vacancies for those with communications, community, education or planning interests, or in analysing and interpreting the data from our usage surveys.

Further information on these roles is available on request and we welcome the opportunity to talk further with anyone interested. Note that these roles would not require the volunteer to become a Trustee.

Thanks again for all your support,

Regards,

Rob Gray,

Chair of FORCE

**FORCE Volunteer Days and Activity Programme**

Date	Location	Activities
25 <sup>th</sup> May	Shot Tower, Crane Park 11.00am-12.30pm	Walk & Talk Dementia Friendly Bird Walk
30 <sup>th</sup> May	Twickenham Green 11am start	HANDS May Fair
1 <sup>st</sup> June	Shot Tower, Crane Park 2.00pm-4.00pm	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) Trees for Children (LWT)
5 <sup>th</sup> June	Shot Tower, Crane Park 2.00pm-4.00pm	Walk & Talk History of the Gunpowder Mills (with the Hounslow History Society)
8 <sup>th</sup> June	Shot Tower, Crane Park 4.30pm-6.00pm	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) Dragonflies & River Dipping (LWT)
12 <sup>th</sup> June*	Hospital Bridge Road entrance to Crane Park 10-30am start	Balsam Bash
15 <sup>th</sup> June	Shot Tower, Crane Park 4.30pm-6.00pm	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) Frogs & Pond Dipping (LWT)
16 <sup>th</sup> June	The Pavilion, Kneller Gardens 2.00pm-3.30pm	Walk & Talk Trees
29 <sup>th</sup> June	Shot Tower, Crane Park 4.30pm-6.00pm	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) River Dipping (in National Rivers Week) (LWT)
30 <sup>th</sup> June	Shot Tower, Crane Park 6.00pm-7.30pm	Walk & Talk Fish of the River Crane (LWT)
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Shot Tower, Crane Park 10.30am-3.00pm	Walk & Talk Herbal Walk (LWT)
3 <sup>rd</sup> August	Mereway Nature Park 11.00am-12.30pm	Walk & Talk Butterflies (Butterfly Survey Count)
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup> July Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> July Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> Aug	To be confirmed	Community Learning Scything with TCV <a href="http://www.tcv.org.uk/richmond">www.tcv.org.uk/richmond</a> or call Andy on 07764 655667 for more information
16 <sup>th</sup> August	Shot Tower, Crane Park 2.00pm-3.30pm	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) River Dipping (LWT)
25 <sup>th</sup> August	Shot Tower, Crane Park 2.00pm-4.00pm	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) Spiders (LWT)
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Shot Tower, Crane Park 10.00am-11.00am	Walk & Talk (Family Friendly) Mindfulness Walk
11 <sup>th</sup> September	Kneller Gardens	Dog Show (Friends of Kneller Gardens)
19 <sup>th</sup> September	Shot Tower, Crane Park 10.00pm-11.30am	Walk & Talk Fungi Walk
21 <sup>st</sup> September	Twickenham Club, Church Street, Twickenham	FORCE AGM
9 <sup>th</sup> October*	Venue to be arranged	FORCE Volunteer Day

\*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.