

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our autumn newsletter. Thank you to all our members who attended the AGM and to the 30 or so of you who mucked in on our first volunteer day of the season at Twickenham Junction Rough. Your involvement is key to our success so we greatly welcome and encourage your active interest.

Opportunities to Get Involved

Our full series of monthly volunteer days is now in place with the next two being at Willow Way in November followed by Twickenham Rifle Club in December. As always these will be on the second Sunday of the month from 10.30am.

We have also agreed with TCV the dates for the next community learning events – eight days of woodland coppicing and hedge laying booked on weekdays between November and February. The shire horses of Operation Centaur will also be back with TCV in Willow Way on 8th November.



Two further TCV days have recently been added to the November programme, planting three new wetland scrapes proposed for Crane Park near Hospital Bridge Road. These scrapes are being created by Richmond Parks Dept. to try and deal with long term waterlogging and settlement issues at this location.

The Mayor of Richmond officially launched the third of TCV's local weekly Green Gyms in October. There are now local opportunities to get fit and make a difference with the Green Gym

every Monday (Pevensey), Tuesday (Hounslow Heath) and Wednesday (Mereway Nature Park).

Our final 2017 walk on 16 December is along the Duke of Northumberland's River from Isleworth to Kneller Gardens to celebrate all the recent additions to the path; such as easier routes, water vole habitats, new sign boards etc. We may even spot the terrapin sunning himself! The walk is free and you can book yourself in here

<http://www.force.org.uk/calendar/item/29905246>

More information is available in the events programme below and via our web-site.

We should have a new calendar for the 2018 season of walks and talks available shortly. Is there a topic that you would like to see covered? Let us know.

UK Fungus Day

October 8th was *UK Fungus Day* so we celebrated with a Fungi Walk along the banks of the River Crane with expert Andy Overall <http://www.fungitobewith.org>; one of our most

popular walks with nearly 30 people registered. We identified approximately 20 different fungi, which was a good number considering the weather had been a tad dry so not beneficial for fungi growth.



The fungi ranged from ground hugging mushrooms to large fan fungi growing from tree trunks, even some that looked like caked mud! The details of the fungi shall be added to the Wildlife page of FORCE's website alongside the 2014 and 2016 reports.

This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



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Duke's River Project

The project has recently taken delivery of the signs and waymarkers for the route along the river footpath and these are due to be installed in the near future. We are also very pleased to say that the RFU has agreed to step back the fence along their boundary with the path to allow a safe new pathway to be installed along this reach. Work will start with environmental improvements this winter followed by the main path installation, following the Six Nations, in the spring and summer of 2018.



Planning Responses

FORCE has engaged with international real estate company SEGRO regarding their proposals for new warehousing next to the Causeway site on the Crane in Feltham. This has resulted in revisions to their plans to improve the adjacent public open space and the prospect of a longer-term engagement with SEGRO to help manage this lovely but neglected riverside site.

We objected to a proposal to site a new telecoms mast on the Cranford Playing Fields in Twickenham and we are pleased to note that this proposal has been turned down by the council.

FORCE spoke at the Hearing to the Richmond Local Plan and achieved important and helpful amendments to the plan with respect to the lower Crane Valley.

We are tracking major potential changes to the Hounslow Local plan, involving the large-scale removal of Green Belt protections from open spaces throughout the middle and lower parts of the Crane valley.

We are also responding in support of proposals to improve the landscape and functional value of the upper reaches of the river at the Headstone Manor and Newton Park sites by LB Harrow.

Citizen Crane

This project is now in its fourth year and has recently issued (on the Crane Valley web-site) its annual report on the third year of operation. <http://www.cranevalley.org.uk/projects/citizen-crane.html> Thames Water has stepped in to fund the project for a further three years. TW are also working up proposals to develop the River Crane as a pilot urban "smarter catchment" as part of their programme of work from 2020. This could be a major positive development for the Crane catchment and we are engaging with them on how it will benefit the river.

Usage Surveys

The next of our twice-yearly usage surveys will be held on Sunday 21st January between 0800 and 1600 hours. If the path through Twickenham Junction Rough is open to the public by this date, we will be counting the usage both here and at our long-term monitoring point at the Meadway entrance to Crane Park.

These surveys have been running for five years and the database we are developing is very helpful, when engaging with the local councils and developers, and making the case for improved public open spaces. We welcome any further support from members in conducting these counts, so please contact info@force.org.uk if you are able to help for an hour or two on the day.

Regards,

Rob Gray,

Chair of FORCE



Volunteer Days and Activity Programme

Date	Event and Location	Activities
8 th November	TCV volunteer day with Operation Centaur at Willow Way 10.30am	Improving the meadow on this site with shire horses supported by volunteers
12 th November	FORCE Volunteer Sunday Willow Way from 10.30am	Maintaining the hedge, meadow, fruit trees and pathways
15 th and 16 th November	TCV volunteer days at the new scrapes in Crane Park near to Hospital Bridge Road	Planting up the three new scrapes planned for this area with wetland species
22 nd and 23 rd November	TCV community learning days: coppicing trees in Crane Park	Letting more light into the river and woodland glades – using the cut trees to create dead hedges and poles for hedging
6 th and 7 th December	TCV community learning days: hedge laying in Crane Park	Management of the 1000 metre hedge, laying the live hedge and building more dead hedges
10 th December	FORCE Volunteer Sunday Twickenham Rifle Club 10.30am	Maintain and improve the Rifle Club site, Craneford Fields and Marsh Farm Lane
16 th December	Walk and Talk from Silverhall Park to Kneller Gardens - 10.30am	A walk to celebrate the work done on this four kilometre route
14 th January 2018	FORCE Volunteer Sunday Hanworth Road - Crane Park	Coppicing, river management and maintaining the outdoor classroom
17 th /18 th January	TCV community learning days: coppicing trees in Crane Park	Continued work to coppice trees and manage the river and woodland glades
31 st January and 1 st February	TCV community learning days: hedge laying in Crane Park	Laying the live hedge and building dead hedging to fill in gaps
11 th February	FORCE Volunteer Sunday Mill Road in Crane Park	Managing the meadow open space and improving light penetration into the river
11 th March	FORCE Volunteer Sunday Butts Farm	Managing the orchard and riverside open spaces

Walk and talk events are free but registration is essential. To register go to the events page on the FORCE website <http://www.force.org.uk/calendar/view> and follow the links. More information will be provided following registration. All other events are free, and no registration is necessary. More information is available through the FORCE and/or TCV web-sites.