

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our summer 2018 newsletter. We have been very busy over the last few months as you will see below. More information on our activities can be found on our web-site, Twitter and Facebook feeds (where we now have over 1400 followers) – links below.

As a result of all our activities (and our commitment to remain a volunteer only organisation) we are looking for more people to support some of our key areas of work. If you are interested in getting more involved then please e-mail us, let us know your interests and we can set up a chat over a coffee to take things forward.

### Planning Developments

FORCE have been in discussion with SEGRO regarding their proposals adjacent to the Causeway Open Space in LB Hounslow for the last 12 months. We are now starting to work together with SEGRO and the council to improve and maintain the value of this riverside site – as well as better links to Cranford Park and Donkey Wood (upstream and downstream), thereby creating an enhanced green corridor through the middle Crane.

We have successfully lobbied Richmond Council and Richmond upon Thames College to ensure they set up a community liaison group (CLG) (as required by their planning permission) to optimise the benefits to local communities and open spaces of their development. We continue to sit on the Twickenham Station CLG and have started to attend a new CLG, linked to proposals by Harlequins for more development of their site.

FORCE are involved in discussions with Heathrow and their consultants, alongside other key parties such as the Colne and Crane Valley Partnerships, The Environment Agency and Local Authorities. Our approach to the Third Runway Development (see Objection submitted in March 2018) is set out in <https://www.force.org.uk/what-we-do/planning/>

Heathrow lies largely within the Crane catchment, and existing activities at the airport already affect the quality and integrity of the river corridor, regardless of any expansion. We therefore see it as essential to take an active part in these discussions to ensure that the needs and potential of local open spaces are protected and enhanced.

These are only the main planning developments we are engaged with - and this is a key area where support from members with an interest and knowledge of planning and open space issues would be very welcome.

Finally, we were very pleased that the new path through Twickenham Junction Rough was opened recently, following several years working closely with Council officers and the developer St James. We are looking forward to our volunteer day there on 14<sup>th</sup> October.

### TCV volunteer scything in the mid-day sun



### Volunteer Activities

Whilst FORCE volunteers are taking a well-earned rest until October, The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) have continued to go out through the summer, and have recently completed a programme of river restoration and meadow management works as part of our community learning project. TCV will be out again in September to improve the environmental value of the Duke's River along the RFU stadium reach, in advance of the new path works proposed for this winter. We plan to announce a new winter programme of community learning events soon.

This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



### Mayday Genealogy

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The three green gyms continue to do great work every week along the river corridor. We are hopeful that a fourth weekly event may be set up in the near future linked to the Causeway Site (see also above).



**TCV Volunteers at a new loggery in Crane Park - with designer Kirsten Wehner from St Martin's Central School of Art**

**Improvements to the Lower Crane**

The lower Crane below Kneller Gardens has been in a poor condition since being widened and straightened in the 1920's and 30's. More recently it has suffered increasingly from low and zero flows during droughts.

Last November the EA started a long term trial, changing the flow controls at the Mereway Road Weir to allow more into the Crane during low flow periods. This summer has provided a very rigorous test of this system and (so far) the results are encouraging. The Crane has stayed alive and is supporting many fish, along with dragonflies, kingfishers and little egrets. Conditions in the Duke's River appear to have remained favourable – and have been helped by recent marginal vegetation improvements.



**River Restoration vision for Moormead Park**

The Crane Valley Partnership (CVP) launched its vision for the Lower Crane late last year. <https://www.force.org.uk/news/lower-crane-vision/> Public survey results showed around 90 per cent of 200+ respondents strongly supported the proposals. CVP has now appointed consultants to investigate the feasibility of river restoration works along the lower 4km of the river to the Thames, with costed project components due in spring 2019. FORCE, alongside other community groups, the two councils and the EA, are part of the liaison group for this project.

FORCE was sorry to learn that Ilse Steyl, Crane Valley Partnership Development Manager, is leaving her post. FORCE is grateful to her for her contribution and support over the last five years.

**Wildlife and Fruit**

We are working with an ecologist to carry out surveys of small mammals and reptiles in Crane Park over the late summer. We would be grateful for any sightings or information about raptors (particularly owls and kestrels) here or elsewhere along the lower Crane.

**The Orchard Project** works with communities across London to plant and restore orchards. Two years ago they started a cider and juicing enterprise. Volunteer labour from across the London is used to make the cider from apples collected and donated from community orchards and gardens in London area. A first opportunity to donate apples to this enterprise will be at the Kneller Gardens Dog Show on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

A full list of events is provided below and we look forward to seeing you at one soon. The date of the FORCE AGM is not yet fixed but is planned for November 2018.

Regards,

Rob Gray,

Chair of FORCE



**Volunteer Days and Activities Programme**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event and Location</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Friday 24th August 5pm	Community Learning Mammal Survey – Mill Road Entrance to Crane Park	Please see website for further details
26th August 8.30am – 10.30	Community Learning Mammal Survey – Mill Road Entrance to Crane Park	Please see website for further details
26th August 6.30pm – 8.30	Community Learning Mammal Survey – Mill Road Entrance to Crane Park	Please see website for further details
27th August 8.30am until afternoon	Community Learning Mammal Survey – Mill Road Entrance to Crane Park	Please see website for further details
29 <sup>th</sup> August 10-30am onwards	TCV work day on the Duke's River	See TCV web-site <a href="https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond">https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond</a>
30 <sup>th</sup> August 10-30am onwards	TCV work day on the Duke's River and/or Twickenham Rough	See TCV web-site <a href="https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond">https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond</a>
31 <sup>st</sup> August 7.50pm to 9.30pm	Walk and Talk Bat walk in Kneller Gardens	An evening bat walk led by an expert (walk full – waiting list only)
16 <sup>th</sup> September	Mindfulness Walk Shot Tower beside Crane Park island	A walk along the River Crane - including periods of mindful movement, meditation, silence and reflection
19 <sup>th</sup> September	TCV work day on the Duke's River – RFU reach	See TCV web-site <a href="https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond">https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond</a>
20 <sup>th</sup> September	TCV work day on the Duke's River – RFU reach	See TCV web-site <a href="https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond">https://www.tcv.org.uk/london/richmond</a>
30 <sup>th</sup> September	Annual Open Day Kneller Gardens from 1pm	Dog show, tug of war, duck race and other activities – FORCE marquee and info.
14 <sup>th</sup> October	Twickenham Junction Rough*	FORCE volunteer day
11 <sup>th</sup> November	Twickenham Station to Moormead*	FORCE volunteer day
9 <sup>th</sup> December	Willow Way*	FORCE volunteer day
13 <sup>th</sup> January	Crane Park - Hanworth Road*	FORCE volunteer day
10 <sup>th</sup> February	Brazil Mill and Donkey Woods*	FORCE volunteer day
10 <sup>th</sup> March	Crane Park - Butts Farm*	FORCE volunteer day
14 <sup>th</sup> April	Duke's River – Riverside Walk*	FORCE volunteer day
12 <sup>th</sup> May	Duke's River – RFU reach*	FORCE volunteer day
9 <sup>th</sup> June	Crane Park – Hospital Bridge Rd*	FORCE volunteer day

\*Preliminary location for FORCE Volunteer Day. Check the web-site nearer the time for confirmation

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. All other events are free, and no registration is necessary. More information is available through the FORCE and/or TCV web-sites.

There are three Green Gyms operating along the River Crane. All are free with no booking required. Everyone can join in this gentle exercise in a social environment whilst working together to improve local riverside spaces. You can turn up on the day (10.45am to 2pm) or contact TCV Green Gym for more information.

Pevensey Road Green Gym meets every Monday – call Chloe on 07717 494476

Hounslow Heath Green Gym meets every Tuesday

Richmond Green Gym meets every Wednesday at Kneller Gardens – call Chloe a/a

For more information: [www.tcv.org.uk/london/green-gym-london](http://www.tcv.org.uk/london/green-gym-london)