

# 2017 Walks & Talks Review

Friends of the River Crane (FORCE)  
[www.force.org.uk](http://www.force.org.uk) / email [info@force.org.uk](mailto:info@force.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No. 1155971  
Registered Company No 8383410

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## Introduction

FORCE conducted a series of Walks & Talks in 2017 with support from friends and partner organisations. FORCE raises awareness of the lower Crane Valley to local people by highlighting the ecology to promote the open spaces as a community asset. The W&T events explored the environmental value of the river corridor, emphasising health, wellbeing and leisure opportunities, plus helping people to learn about the flora, fauna and history.

Past experience in Crane Park has shown increased involvement of the local community leads to more use of the green space and, as a result, the people using the space feel safer.

## Walk and Talk Topics & Target Audience

The sessions were targeted at local residents, plus some specific social groups e.g. organisations supporting older people, families and children. They were scheduled across the week with a particular eye to coincide with national events e.g. National Butterfly Count, school holidays. An important remit of the project was that all events would be free of charge to attendees to ensure no-one would be precluded on the basis of income. In 2017 FORCE received funding in order to promote the Duke's River Walk which meant that many more of the events were held along this river corridor than in the past.

The walks & talks had a wide range of topics to reach the target audience with themes of :

- a. Ecology
- b. Family
- c. History

These events furthered FORCE objects :

1. To operate for the benefit of the public, and with other interested parties, to protect and enhance the environment of the River Crane, the Duke of Northumberland's River, their corridors and surrounding open spaces within the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames and its environs, for the benefit of the eco-system, residents and visitors; and
2. To advance the education of the public in the ecology, conservation, protection and improvement of the environment of the River Crane, the Duke of Northumberland's River, their corridors and surrounding open spaces within the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames and its environs.

## Promotion

Promotion of the events this year included :

1. Posters in noticeboards in the locale, parks and London Boroughs of Richmond and Hounslow,
2. Electronic media
  - o FORCE website
  - o FORCE Facebook and Twitter
  - o Eventbrite
  - o RBuT website
3. Email notification to members
4. Via other environmental networks eg SWLEN, TCV who further disseminated via their communication channels
5. 500 leaflets distribution through libraries, local fairs, and other organisations.

## Governance Structure

Funding for the 2017 W&T programme was through the Dukes River Walk Steering Group funded through the Big Green Fund. This was a joint project across Richmond and Hounslow boroughs, in partnership with FORCE, Thames Water and the Environment Agency. 13 out of the 19 walks and talks were held along the Duke's River Walk.

All walks were set up and administered by FORCE. Events on specific topics or locales were led by partners or expert knowledge holders as noted below in the table of events.

## Event Metrics

Monitoring was undertaken to evaluate take-up of events, attendance and inculcate feedback to evaluate success rates of event types.

Registration for the W&Ts was encouraged via Eventbrite to gather contact information and aid communications. A few people preferred personal contact where not able to use computers. Total attendance was recorded for all events. Some events had a limited number of places due to the locale e.g. Mogden site.

The Registration Form recorded actual attendance and event metrics. However, it was not always fully completed as attendees may not register or only complete certain information, omitting other. Hence the data presented in this report is for indicative review rather than absolute values which limits comparative purposes. E.g. Someone may attend the W&T but not answer 'member' question so these two data sets are not immediately comparable nor commensurate.

After each event feedback was inculcated from attendees plus those who had registered via Eventbrite but failed to show up. This subjective response data is interesting in itself, but also in what it does not say, and response levels. See Appendix 2.

## Schedule of Events

Walk and Talk	Walk owner	Cost	Walk Leader	2017 Date held
Headstone Manor, Harrow	FORCE	£0	Rob Gray	Saturday 28 January
Birds, Wildlife, Photography on the DNR	FORCE	£100	Dan Keel, Jane Satchwell	Saturday 11 February
The Duke's River Loop	FORCE	£0	Frances Bennett	Saturday 18 February
Walk in Mogden site	Thames Water	£0	Lydia Blake, Frances Bennett	Thursday 30 March
Ecology of DNR and Water Voles	FORCE	£0	Rob Gray, Frances Bennett	Saturday 15 April
Happenings on the Heath talk	FORCE	£0	Katie Cox, Frances Bennett	Saturday 6 May
Birds on the DNR	FORCE	£0	Keith Martin, Jane Satchwell	Saturday 20 May
Wildlife at Mogden	Thames Water	£0	Lydia Blake, Frances Bennett	Saturday 3 June
Woodland Trees	LBRuT	£0	Jane Crowther, Frances Bennett	Saturday 10 June
Butterfly Walk, <i>Big Butterfly Count</i>	TCV	£0	Jack McCrickard, Jane Satchwell	Friday 4 August
Mindfulness Walk	SpaceToBe	£0	Andrea Hosfeld, Jane Satchwell	Monday 7 August
Big Bug Hunt	FORCE	£0	Frances Bennett	Saturday 19 August
Children's DNR Walk	FORCE	£0	Frances Bennett	Saturday 19 August
Who Lives here ? Model making	FORCE	£150	Paul Smith, Frances Bennett	Saturday 19 August
Bat walk	Philip Briggs	£0	Philip Briggs, Frances Bennett	Sunday 3 September
River Invertebrates	ZSL	£0	Joe Pecorelli, Rob Gray	Saturday 16 September
Kidds Mill & eels on DNR	EA	£0	Chris, Frances Bennett	Saturday 7 October
Fungi	FungiToBeWith	£100	Andy Overall, Jane Satchwell	Wednesday 18 October
Isleworth to Kneller walk	FORCE	£0	Frances Bennett, Alan Charles	Monday 16 December
	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£350</b>		

Most W&Ts were scheduled on a Saturday to enable as many people to attend and gain as much attendance as possible outside of working hours. During the school holidays a few were scheduled during the week aiming at children activities and learning.

Please note that three walks Source to Thames were held in 2017 but were part of a previous year's project so are not included in this report.

## Event Metrics : Attendance

260 people joined the W&T events in 2017, of whom 60 were children. Total attendance at each event, with 2016 attendance figures in (), was:

1. Headstone Manor	5
2. Birds Wildlife Photographs on the DNR	15 *
3. The Duke Northumberland's River Loop Walk	16
4. Walk around Mogden site	14
5. Ecology of DNR and water voles	24
6. Happenings on the Heath talk	13
7. Birds on the DNR	10 (12)
8. Wildlife at Mogden	11
9. Woodland Houses - trees	7 (3)
10. Butterfly Walk	19 (18) *
11. Mindfulness Walk	10 (17)
12. Big Bug Hunt	14
13. Children's DNR walk	5
14. Who Lives here ? Model making	30 (13)
15. Bat walk	13 (25) *
16. River Invertebrates	19 (14)
17. Kidds Mill and eels on the DNR	10
18. Fungi	16 (27) *
19. Isleworth to Kneller walk	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>260</b>

Although this list indicates attendance levels, it cannot be taken as a league table in walk popularity given it masks some days where bad weather deterred people as indicated with \* e.g. the bat walk had very heavy rain, cool and overcast weather deterred butterflies and dry weather led to little fungi being found.

Of the total 260 attendances of people on the walks, there were actually 152 people who joined the walks i.e. several people or families came on several walks.

Attendance levels were broadly similar to 2016 records when 228 people, including 63 children, joined 13 W&Ts held in conjunction with London Wildlife Trust.

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The number of attendees against actual booking numbers, including how many attendees were children, is shown in figure 1 below. Most popular children friendly events were River Invertebrates, Butterfly, Bats, and Model Making – the latter had 16 children who were playing in the park and joined the session impromptu.

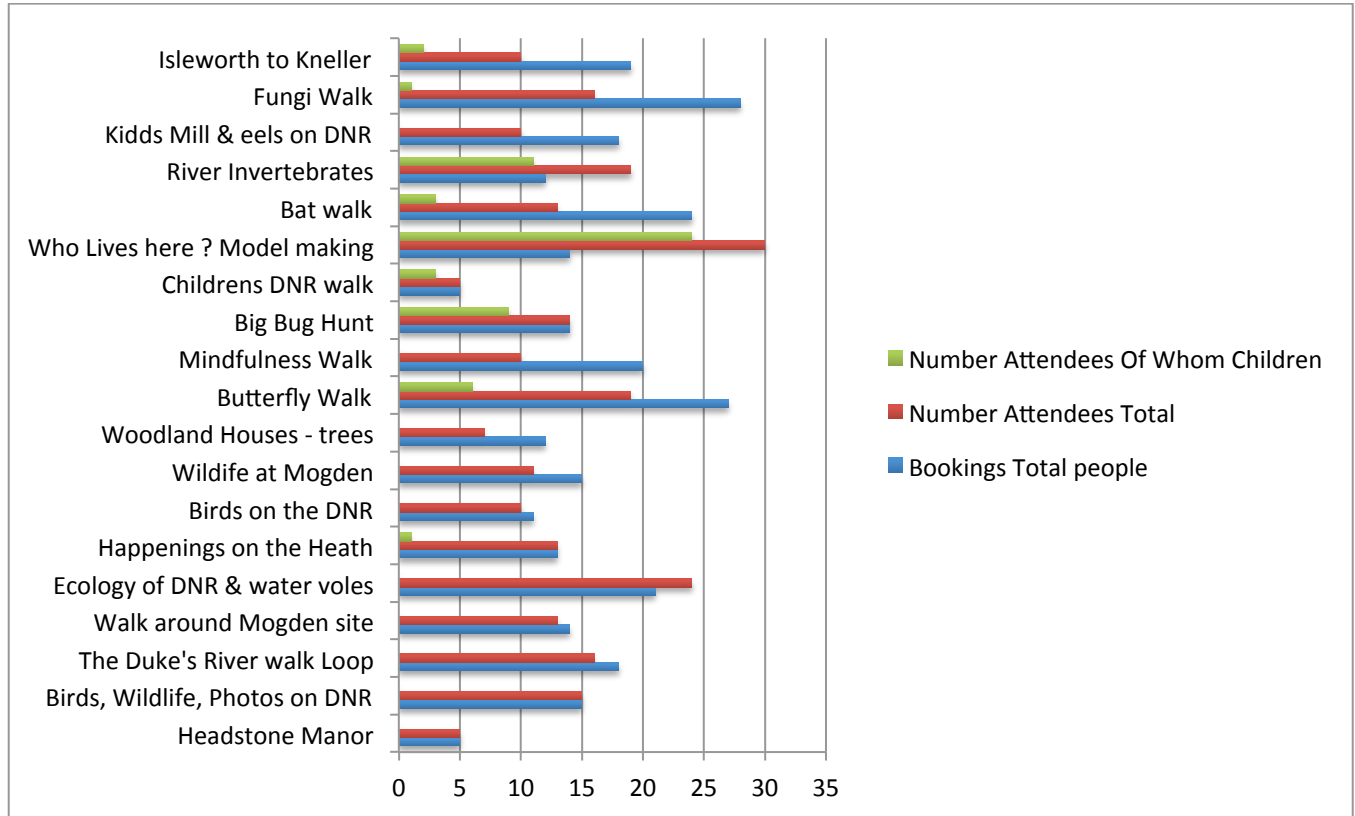


Figure 1. 2017 bookings and number of actual attendees of whom children.

Table 1 shows seasonal consideration of the average number of people attending walks. Notably average attendance was similar across the four seasons, with a slight dip in the winter months. It is encouraging that there is steady attendance through the year and people enjoy being outside despite inclement weather at some events, snowy days and heavy rain.

Season	Number of Events	Number of Attendees	Average per event
Winter	4	46	12
Spring	4	60	15
Summer	7	96	14
Autumn	4	58	15

Table 1. Average attendees at walks within seasons

## Event Metrics : Bookings and No Shows

100% of bookings were made via Eventbrite in 2017. This is a sharp rise from 63% last year.

Of 305 bookings made :

- 209 Eventbrite registrations attended
- 96 failed to attend on the day, about 30% which is quite disappointing
- an additional 50 people showed up on the day
- 2 attended via personal contact.

The relative translation of bookings into attendance levels is shown in Figure 2 below. Birds & Photography on DNR, Ecology of DNR & Water Voles, Big Bug Hunt, Walk around Mogden, and Happenings on the Heath had large translation rates. Highest rates of non-attendance can be seen to be Isleworth to Kneller walk, Fungi, Kidds Mill & Eels, Bat, Mindfulness, and Butterfly walks. Some of these walks were early or late in the year so maybe the weather deterred people. The no-show rate is disappointing, particularly as Eventbrite reminds people 48 hours in advance so there is plenty of time to cancel the booking.

Conversely, there were several walks where people turning up on the day swelling numbers, namely Model Making and River Invertebrates which were interactive events and successfully attracted families passing by.

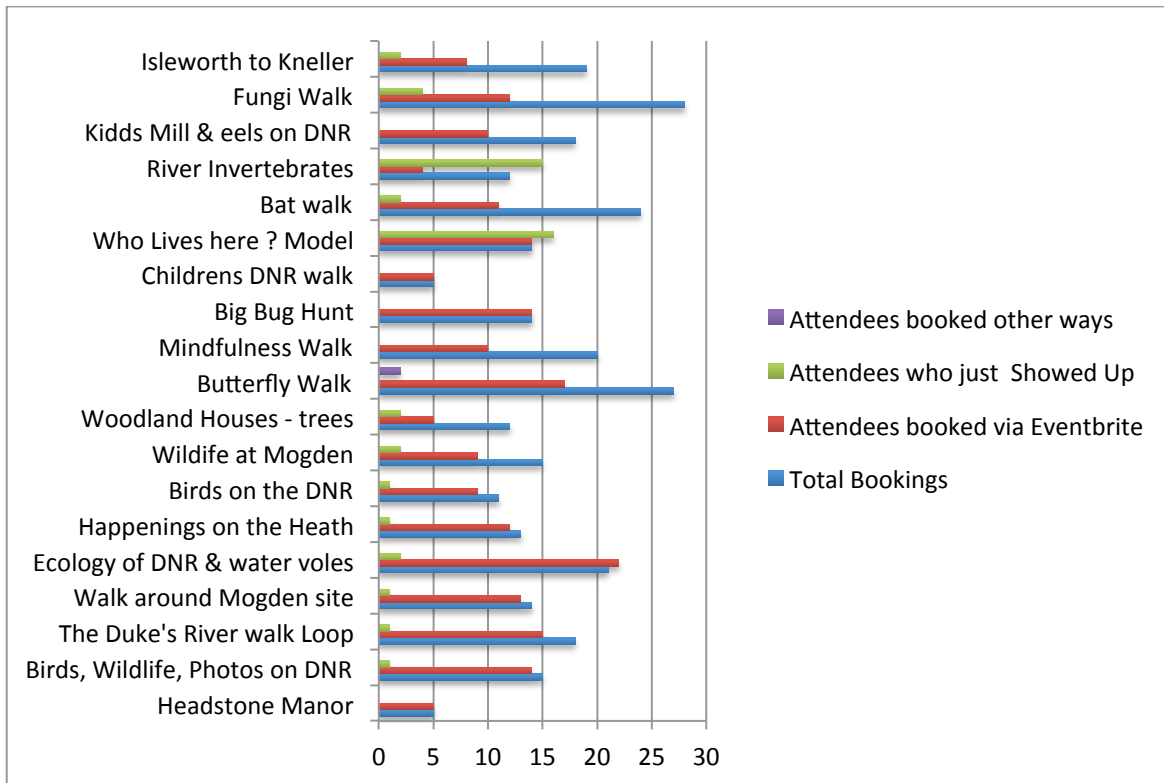


Figure 2 : Number of attendees sorted by booking origin. 'Showed up' are people who came along on the day without booking or were passing by and decided to join in. 'Other ways' are personal contact.



## Event Metrics : Membership Attendance

Attendees are asked at each event about their FORCE membership status. 108 people were already members showing positive support of these events by core membership. About 160 people weren't members.

Also asked was if the Membership Secretary could contact them :

- 59 answered positively indicating they could be interested in becoming a member.
- 140 people didn't answer the question maybe because they didn't want any communication asking for membership. Notably this question was the one most frequently left incomplete on the registration form.
- 28 declined to have the Membership Secretary contact them.

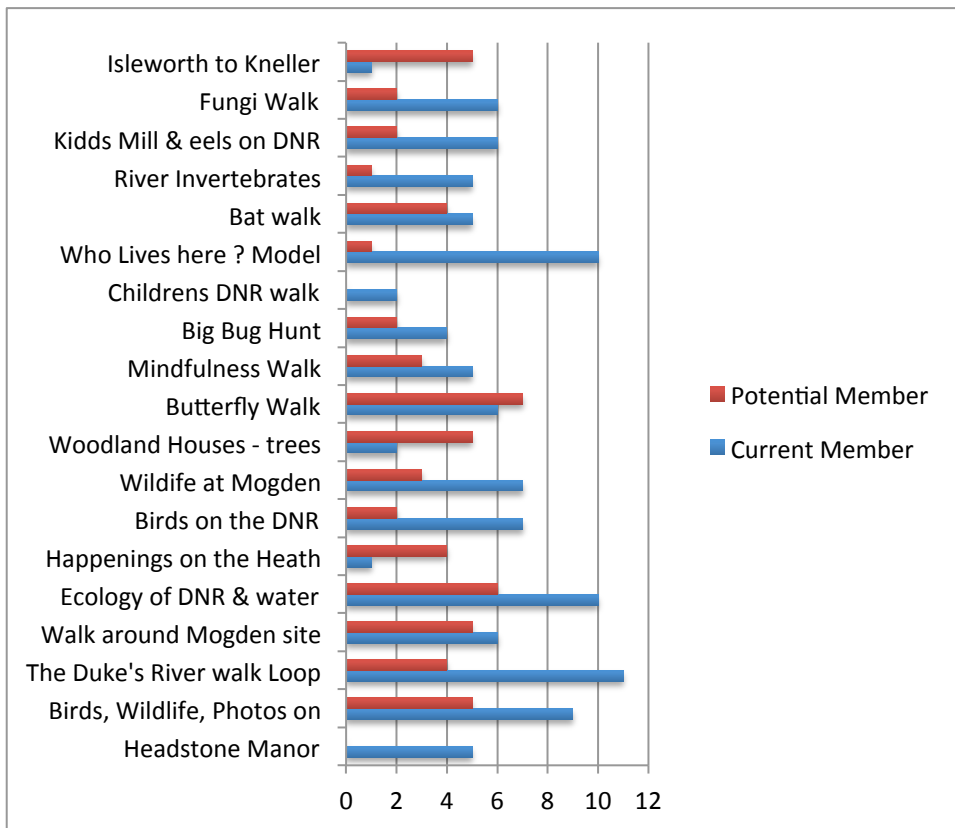


Figure 3 : Attendees already members of FORCE and those interested in becoming members.

Invitations were sent to those who answered positively indicating how they could become a member and explaining that FORCE's strength is it's membership body for local representation.

9 people who attended W&Ts joined FORCE as a member in 2017. Of these 6 answered the question positively, 1 declined and another left it void which may indicate confusion or a positive change of mind. This is 15% conversion rate to membership of the 59 interested, but only a small fraction of the 160 people who weren't members of FORCE.

## Event Metrics : Publicity

People were asked where they had learnt of the event to understand which publicity or news avenues were most successful. Only 157 responses were given, but these were interesting :

- 36% heard via the FORCE newsletter
- 20% via personal contact
- 13% Facebook and Twitter
- 9% was Web (non-specific answer so source of information is unknown)
- 8% Green websites and partners. Those noted were SWLEN, Friends of Twickenham Green, Hounslow Local History Group, Hands Fair and Carer’s group.
- 7% Eventbrite indicating it was used to search for events independent of booking
- 5% FORCE leaflets and posters
- 3% Other, Hounslow Newsletter

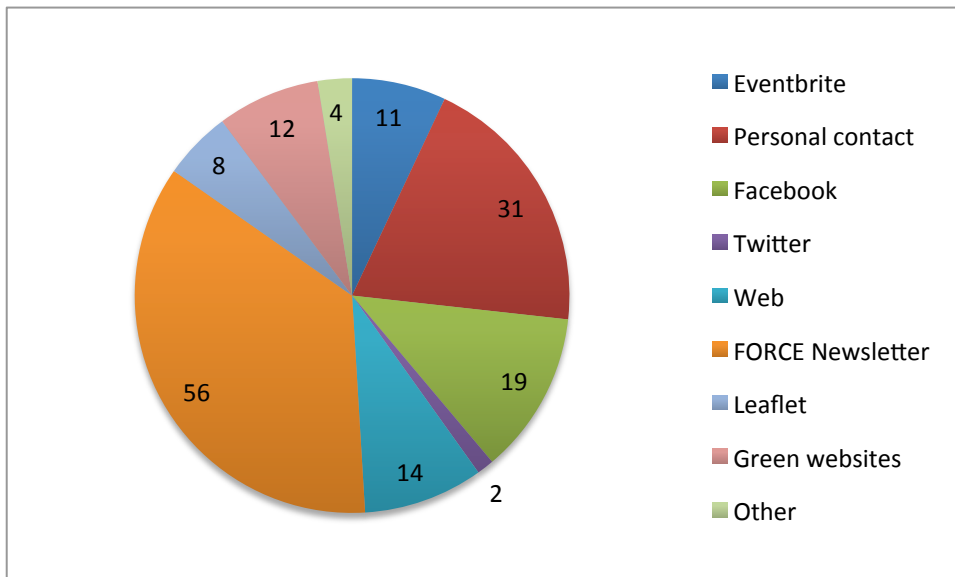


Table 5 : Source of Event Information from Registration Form.

Twitter data indicates that 12,445 people viewed W&Ts Tweets by 347 engagements, and these were retweeted 47 times by a surprising variety of organisations including green organisations, partners, individuals and local news agents. See Appendix 1. In the last two years Twitter and Facebook have proven most useful in advertising the W&Ts outside the membership base.

Unfortunately viewing data isn’t available for the FORCE website.

## Event Metrics : Feedback

Attendee feedback was quite poor this year. FORCE relies on people responding to know highlights and improvement areas so this is quite disappointing given the walks are for free. Feedback comments are listed in Appendix 2.

Favourable comments :

1. Experts knowledge and presentation were praised e.g. Dan was like our own 'Attenborough'
2. interesting to see "behind the scenes " of something most people never give a moment's thought to Great hands on learning for the kids
3. We all felt that we have learned lots of important information about our local natural habitat, as a family we are often out along the river crane, it is so important to preserve this beauty
4. Thank you all so much.

Improvements suggested:

1. Information sheets. Eg River dipping requested an identification chart again this year.
2. More walks to include or end at a pub.

It is difficult to commensurate feedback but it is marked that more people responded on the most popular events, whereas some events received little or no feedback. No response could indicate a lack of drive to reply or the walk wasn't enjoyed.

An indirect measurement of feedback is whether people return for more than one walk. This is a significant statistic as it shows that they were interested enough to learn more and had enjoyed earlier walks. There were a total of 152 different attendees (excluding FORCE Trustees) :

- 41 people attended 2 or more events (27%)
- 13 people attended 3 or more events (9%)
- Notably one person attended 5 walks, and three others 4 walks.

## Conclusion

The 2017 Walks and Talks was a successful season in terms of the numbers of people who joined the walks, spread of subject matter and meeting the objects of the funder, Dukes River Walk Steering Group funded through the Big Green Fund, and FORCE objects.

Notable from the W&T information gathered was :

1. This analysis fed into the decision making for the 2018 W&T schedule :
  - a. Popularity indicators to guide which W&Ts to hold
  - b. Reduce the number of W&Ts to about one a month. FORCE also holds Volunteer Days so more than 2 events a month requires a high amount of Trustee input.
  - c. Focus on children events in summer holidays
  - d. Build on national events e.g. Big Butterfly Count, Dawn Chorus event.
2. Improvements suggested by walkers were :
  - a. emphasis on the 'what you can do' ...quite a lot of members have Time/resources could/perhaps want to do more in their local spot.
  - b. some graphic/ written reference (plastic covered identification sheet?) to reinforce what we are seeing in the Flesh!
3. 30% people who booked for a W&T failed to show up on the day, even with the Eventbrite reminder email sent 48hours beforehand. This is a high proportion and disappointing, especially at those events where number of places are limited e.g. Mogden.
4. Anecdotal observation indicated the W&Ts are recruiting plenty of older people but not many children/young people. FORCE needs to build on the interactive sessions and think more creatively about how to engage this age group. Proposed action : An opportunity exists by talking to the DoE students who are active with FORCE to see what would appeal to them.
5. The W&Ts gave experts a local forum to share their knowledge and their reach to the public too. FORCE are grateful for their support.
6. The number of walkers becoming FORCE members is disappointingly low. Whilst this isn't a primary aim of the W&Ts, FORCE anticipated people enjoying and learning about the Duke of Northumberland River and River Crane as a local environs would be interested in the aims of FORCE and the difference their membership would make in helping support the area.  
Proposed action :
  - a. Explain at events that membership makes a difference and is very reasonable, give out membership forms.
  - b. Continue to email inviting membership.
7. A wide range of topics were presented so meeting FORCE objects to advance the education of the public in the ecology, conservation, protection and improvement of the environment of the River Crane, the Duke of Northumberland's River. Feedback showed that this was achieved : 'enjoyable, ... informative, ... learned a lot,... the children really enjoyed '.

## Appendix 1 Twitter Statistics

2017 W&T	Date Tweeted	Seen by	Engagements	Re-tweets	Retweeted By	Likes
Bird Walk 20.1.2018	19.12.2017	595	14	3	Richmond Green Gym - 201	6
					TCV Hounslow - 567	
					SWLEN - 2456	
Isleworth to Kneller 16.12.2017	12.12.2018	442	21	3	TCV Hounslow - 567	6
					SWLEN - 2456	
					The Pet Valet - 647	
Kidds Mill 7.10.2017	17.9.2017	135	6	0		
Citizen Crane 16.9.2017	12.9.2017	3037	57	13	(@London) 1929	5
					Hampton Garden Suburb Hort Society - 193	
					Life in Motion - 253	
					London National Park City 14,700	
					Water for Wildlife - 331	
					CC - 322	
					Twickenham Tribune - 962	
					TCV Hounslow - 567	
					(@CathinTwick) 498	
					SWLEN - 2456	
					(AC26) 181	
					Twickenham Tweets 15,000	
					Who lives here 19.8.2017	
Childrens DNR Walk 19.8.2017	17.8.2017	458	15	3	GH - 92	
					JC - 219	
					SWLEN - 2456	
Big Bug Hunt 19.8.2017	17.8.2017	401	12	2	The Merry Pedaller - 541	1
					SWLEN - 2456	
Butterfly walk 4.8.2017	31.7.2017	522	20	3	EA - 1010	5
					JC - 219	
					(@wildsuburban) 343	
	1.8.2017	196	12	1	JC - 219	

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	14.7.2017	159	5	0		
Bulls Bridge 1.7.2017	23.6.2017	525	26	3	GIGL - 2326	3
					SWLEN - 2456	
					Save Hounslow Heath - 20	
Who lives here 10.6.2017	8.6.2017	956	15	3	GIGL - 2326	3
					Crane Park Island - 591	
					JC - 219	
	3.6.2017	134	6	0		
Early Bird Walk 20.5.2017	13.5.2017	119	4	0		
Hanworth Rd to Isleworth 22.4.2017	20.4.2017	248	14	2	SWLEN - 2456	
					Feltham Community 517	
	18.4.2017	166	14	2	Bridge House Pond - 133	
					Green Feltham Project - 374	
DNR walk 15.4.2017	3.4.2017	120	10	0		
Upper Crane Walk 25.2.2017	22.2.2017	253	8	1	TCV Hounslow - 567	1
	15.2.2017	146	1	0		
Kneller to Isleworth 18.2.2017	16.2.2017	290	13	2	TCV Hounslow - 567	2
					TBC Uncorporated - 77	
	13.2.2017	118	2			
	9.2.2017	197	8	1	PA - 122	1
Dan Keel Bird Walk 11.2.2017	7.2.2017	250	9	2	TCV Hounslow - 567	1
					TCV Ops - 81	
	3.2.2017	2283	20	1	Twickenham Tweets - 15,000	1
	28.1.2017	240	17	1	Whitton Sports Centre - 416	
Headstone Manor - 28.1.2017	17.1.2017	126	6	0		
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12455</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>47</b>		<b>37</b>

Names of people have been changed.

## Appendix 2 Feedback Comments from Attendees

Feedback was inculcated to gauge the success of an event and future improvements.

### Headstone Manor : 5 attendees

Mainly Trustees so no feedback.

### Birds & Photographs on DNR Walk, a snowy winters day: 15 attendees

1. It was a good walk Saturday despite the weather. Thanks to Dan for leading the event. Attached is the photo you requested, but the quality is not the best. Partly the light conditions and partly the composition with the building work behind. You might be able to crop and improve it
2. Hammersmith based but looking after cat locally. I thoroughly enjoyed myself – I am new to identifying birds and liked the way Dan didn't assume we were all experts! I feel I learned a lot – a new lovely walk, something about eel traps, something about vole footprint traps, something about birds and the best way to take a picture.... with a nice group of people. Thanks and I will certainly come again.
3. Many thanks for your email. I don't have any suggestions as I thought it was excellent. Dan was like our own 'Attenborough'

### DNR Loop Walk : 16 attendees

1. Yes, I thoroughly enjoyed the walk, the company and learning of how our river corridors are being so much improved, thanks to all the good work you are doing at FORCE I would certainly go along with support for a pub break and definitely enjoyed the pause our stop at the London Apprentice gave. It was especially satisfying in completing the walk seeing those who were not familiar with the geography recognise where the respective rivers split at Kneller Gardens. I'm planning on doing the middle section of the Crane River walk with you on 25th March, and of especial interest there will be Cranford Park, the missing paths to the east and south east of the airport and Feltham Marshalling Yard, a holy grail of the area. My pictures of the koy carp at Mogden Lane have not come out too badly, let me know if you'd like a copy forwarded. I've just uploaded the pictures from our walk, and attach some views of the carp, please use as best you can, and a facebook upload is fine, even if still something of a mystery to me !! I didn't take many photos but happy to send the others if you'd like. Enjoy your holiday and hope to see you on another walk.
2. Learned & saw so much on the delightful 3 Rivers Walk with FORCE along Duke, Crane and Thames

### Mogden Tour : 13 attendees

1. A quick note of thanks for organising a fascinating and informative tour of Mogden yesterday. I never thought I'd get the opportunity to visit this key part of London's infrastructure. Please add me to the distribution list for other events and I look forward to receiving the group photo taken on site soon
2. Thank you so much for organising the visit to Morden. It was so interesting to see "behind the scenes" of something most people never give a moment's thought to. We were lucky to have such an enthusiastic guide in Lydia. I looked at Thames Water's website, and it says that the Mogden's 55 hectare site 'serves' 2.1 million people. It's amazing what you can achieve with

just 0.25 sq metre per customer. I have a small walking group - circulation list of 12, but typically 6-8 turn up per outing. Would you be happy to give us a guided tour of the Kempton Reserve one Thursday morning?

3. I went on the walk around Mogden led by Lydia. It was excellent and I would thoroughly recommend it.
4. Many thanks for guiding us round Mogden yesterday evening. Thanks too to Frances, for FORCE's organisation.

## **DNR Ecology and Water Voles : 24 attendees**

No feedback

## **Hounslow Heath History Talk : 13 attendees**

No feedback

## **Birds on the DNR: 10 attendees :**

1. Thanks Jane & Keith , a most enjoyable event.
2. Very much enjoyed it and happy to have pushed myself to make the early start to a Saturday - thanks for fixing

## **Mogden Wildlife : 11 attendees**

1. Thank you from both of us for a very enjoyable and informative walk in the grounds of Mogden. Lydia Blake is very knowledgeable, a delight to have an introductory guide to the wood mouse and other gems about the site and it's development and her role in the protection of this site

## **Woodland Houses : 7 attendees**

2. An excellent walk this morning. Thanks to FORCE. Learned about tree root length, canopy shaking, kneller gardens and fungi

## **Butterfly Walk : 19 attendees**

3. Thank you for your email and also for the photos. You are too kind, the children and I really enjoyed the walk. We are still talking about it today. You are welcome to use the photos in your website. We all felt that we have learned lots of important information about our local natural habitat, as a family we are often out along the river crane, it is so important to preserve this beauty
4. I did enjoy it and would attend again.

## **Mindfulness : 10 attendees**

1. It was lovely to meet you too. Thank you for organising the walk, I enjoyed it. I am happy for you to use the photographs for your website.



2. I think we are very lucky to have the opportunity to attend an event like this at no cost. I would happily attend again.

## **Bugs, Children's DNR Walk & Model making: 49 attendees**

No feedback received.

## **Bats Walk: 13 attendees**

No feedback received.

## **Citizen Crane & Invertebrates: 19 attendees**

1. It was a super jaunt by the Crane! Things I really liked:
  - \* participative....for all ages and knowledge levels.
  - \* engaging, passionate, experts
  - \* learnt a lotThings to do more of:
  - \* emphasis on the 'what you can do' ...quite a lot of members have Time/resources could/perhaps want to do more in their local spot.
  - \* some graphic/ written reference (plastic covered identification sheet?) to reinforce what we are seeing in the Flesh! Makes it easier to remember?But I accept that it's a fine balance between that and being like an outdoor, lecturing school trip! These aren't meant as criticisms. Great event and thank you FORCE, Citizen Crane et al!

## **Eels and Kidds Mill on the DNR: 10 attendees**

2. I have joined several of your walks this year, which I have much enjoyed: the River Crane; Mogden Sewerage Works; and, on Saturday, Kidds Mill to learn about the amazing life cycle of the eel and its remarkable recovery these last three years. It is heart-warming to know that there are such dedicated people as you and your colleagues to care for our environment. Thank you all so much.

## **Fungi Walk, dry weather for fungi : 16 attendees**

3. Thank you very much for organizing the fungi walk. We enjoyed it very much.
4. Thank you Jane it was a lovely morning.

## **Isleworth to Kneller along the DNR: 10 attendees**

1. Just to let you know I really enjoy Frances's walks. I am a carer and heard about these walks through Richmond Carers Centre. I think she does these walks on a voluntary basis which is amazing for us and introduced us to FORCE. She is such a friendly person and I cannot believe how much knowledge she has, if I could just remember a 10th of it I would be very happy. And it was a big surprise for her to see the Kingfisher sign after all these years of campaigning for her. She was very happy & we did get to see a glimpse of one that day as well. And I'll 2nd that idea about finishing walk near a pub!