



Friends Of the River Crane Environment

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the summer edition of our newsletter, which marks the completion of our first year as a membership group. It also means that membership fees for the coming year are now due; thanks to all of you who have renewed your membership and a gentle reminder to those who have yet to do so. In May we were pleased to receive confirmation of our **Charitable Status** from the Charities Commission and this should help considerably in applying for grants for improvement works for example. It also means we can claim **Gift Aid** on the membership fees. For more information please contact Mike Day, our membership secretary, on 020 8893 3503 or Mike.day@dsl.pipex.com

Lack of Water in the Crane

The last few weeks have been hot and dry and whilst this may have been good for us it has resulted in a familiar problem in the lower reaches of the River Crane. **The weir at Kneller Gardens** controls the division of flows between the Crane and the Duke of Northumberland's River (DNR), providing a near constant flow to the DNR with any remainder going into the main river. During dry spells this often leads to the main **river drying out**. FORCE has submitted a formal complaint to the Environment Agency on this but we acknowledge it may be one or more years before any improvement is seen.

Harlequins Development

The new **west stand** is now largely complete and work has started on the housing. We are still awaiting final designs from the club and the Council regarding the agreed improvement works to the Duke of Northumberland's River path and transfer of a portion of the existing training pitch for public use. Hopefully we will be able to report more progress in our next issue

Kneller Gardens

Some of you may have heard that **Thamesians Rugby Club** are proposing to use and develop a large part of Kneller Gardens as a rugby pitch and training pitch. We, along with local residents' groups, are concerned about the implications of this and are currently in discussion with the club and the Council to ensure the interests of local people and the wider environment are fully protected.

Moor Mead Park

The Council is currently requesting ideas from the public about **possible improvements** to Moor Mead Park. FORCE has already submitted some ideas for improving the relationship between the park and the river and we encourage our members to also submit their views to parks@richmond.gov.uk

Craneford Wall Improvements

We hope you have seen the recent improvements to the wall adjacent to the Twickenham Rifle Club and alongside **Marsh Farm Lane**. We are currently developing plans for further improvement of this area, including a passage through the wall to access the playing field and the small wooded "triangle" on the far side. We shall be submitting plans for funding in the next few weeks

Registered Charity No.: 1108542

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College Proposals

We have met the **new principal** of Richmond Upon Thames College and he has agreed to involve FORCE and the Heatham Residents Association in the development of any plans for the site. He also agreed the two groups should be part of a regular liaison group, alongside council, police and transport representatives, looking at the day to day relationship between the college and its surroundings.

Treasurer and Trustees

In May one of our trustees, **David Trigg**, was elected as a councillor for Twickenham Riverside. Whilst we are pleased for him it has left us without a treasurer and with only eight trustees. Our AGM is on 21st September this year and we are keen to appoint a new **treasurer** and, potentially one or two **new trustees**, at this meeting. If you are interested in these posts please contact our Secretary, Frances Bennett, on 020 8894 6522, or Frances.Bennett@talk21.com

FORCE Open Day on 18th September

Our third annual Open Day will be on and around the Craneford Playing Fields on the afternoon of **Sunday 18th September**, starting at **12 noon**. Each year we try to make the event a little larger and this year we hope to have entertainment and activities on the main field as well as at the Rifle Club, Marsh Farm Allotments and Mereway. We are proposing to re-name this latter site as **“Mereway Nature Park”** and hope to exhibit outline plans of our proposals for the site for public consultation and comment.

Volunteer Days

The new season of volunteer days will start again in October and the proposals for the first three are set out below:

Sunday 9th October: Mereway. *Completion of pathways through to the DNR and development of the meadow area and outdoor classroom.*

Sunday 13th November: Rifle Club/Triangle. *Planting hedges and preparing banks for wild flower plantings plus wall painting.*

Sunday 11th December: Crane Park Island. *Working with London Wildlife Trust to coppice trees and manage the wetland areas*

As always we welcome all ages for the day or just an hour or so. Come and find us on the site. We provide tools and gloves and recommend old clothes and stout shoes. The day starts at 10-30 and goes through until 4-30. For further information call Rob Gray on 020 8892 9518.

Thank-you again for your support and we look forward to seeing you in the coming months,

Regards,

Rob Gray (Chair of FORCE)

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