



Friends Of the River Crane Environment

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the autumn 2007 edition of our newsletter. I am pleased to say that there are more Friends out there than ever as our **membership has passed the 400 mark** so thanks to all of you for your support.

Open Day

In September, we held our **fourth annual Open Day** and it was great to see so many of you come along and enjoy the entertainment and the good weather. Particular thanks are due to all our members who helped on the day. We believe that the attendance this year was larger than ever before and a sensible maximum for what we always envisage as being a fun and informative local event.

Our main objective from the day is to engage with local people about our shared environment, and hear new ideas and thoughts on how it could be managed, and we judge it a success on that basis. An added bonus is that the event more than broke even and raised a few hundred pounds for our funds.

AGM

The **FORCE AGM** was held last month and my annual report to the AGM has been posted on our web-site. The Trustees and key post holders were all re-elected for another year. Whilst it is pleasing to have management continuity, we also welcome all approaches from members interested in either becoming Trustees or suggesting any other options to help and support us.

Mereway Nature Park

We have been developing a **Service Level Agreement** with the council to manage the day to day maintenance of this council owned site on their behalf. This is an exciting new initiative for FORCE and the council, and the first time the council will have used this approach to managing local green spaces. As well as maintenance responsibilities, we will also be able to continue with our improvement works around the site, all in accordance with the **Management Plan** (which you can view on our web-site).

New Signs In The Parks

We welcome the **new signs** the Council has installed at each of their sites in recent weeks as well as the **litter and dog bins** put in Mereway Nature Park. The Council has selected Craneford Play Area to trial a **new weather shelter**, providing a place of shade and rain protection. This will be installed in the next few weeks for a 12 month period and any comments on it should be passed through to the council, through FORCE if you wish.

Crane Riverside Park

Following our announcement in the summer newsletter of £5000 grants from Richmond and Hounslow councils, we have now received **further grants totalling £20,000** from Awards for All and Wates Foundation. This has enabled us to start work on the Feasibility Study for the Park. Consultants have been engaged on our behalf and the report should be prepared in draft form early in the New Year.

This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



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Family History & Genealogy Research Services

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Crane Valley Project Volunteer Survey

Included with this newsletter is a London Wildlife Trust (LWT) Crane Park volunteer survey form. LWT would be grateful if you could complete this confidential survey and return it to: FREEPOST RLSR-HZTH-LRCS, London Wildlife Trust, Skyline House, 200 Union Street, LONDON, SE1 0YW.

Volunteer Days

The full season of **volunteer days for 2007-2008** is shown below. Suggestions for activities during the next season of volunteer days are welcomed. As usual, they will be held on the **second Sunday of the month**, and run between 10-30am and 4-30pm.

Everyone is welcome, for the whole day or an hour, to join in or to see what we are up to first hand. If you are coming to any of these days wear old clothes and stout footwear. We provide gloves and hot drinks but bring a packed lunch if you plan to stay the day.

Sunday 9th December	Crane Park Island <i>Our annual visit to Crane Park Island to pollard willows. This is also an opportunity to collect lengths of willow for transplanting, fruit and vegetable poles, willow weaving, floral displays etc.</i>
Sunday 13th January	Mereway Nature Park <i>Our annual child friendly work day, featuring willow weaving (using products from December) and general maintenance.</i>
Sunday 10th February	Crane Park <i>The first of two days promoting reed beds along the Crane by transplanting from Crane Park Island – lots of mud, lots of fun.</i>
Sunday 9th March	Crane Park <i>See above – plus tree planting and building a dead hedge</i>
Sunday 13th April	Duke of Northumberland's River <i>Improvements to the new strip of land transferred to the public by Harlequins</i>

This month we worked on Twickenham Rifle Club, removing large amounts of graffiti from the walls of both the site and Marsh Farm Lane. Graffiti is a perennial problem and no doubt, it will come back. Having said that, removing it by overpainting is a simple and satisfying task and, in our experience, prompt removal reduces the frequency and extent with which it returns.

Last month we planted some **30 Kilos of daffodil bulbs and 600 crocus bulbs** in Kneller Gardens, working with the Friends of Kneller Gardens. Look out for a fresh display of colour as a herald to spring next year.

Best wishes to all our members,

Rob Gray (Chair of FORCE)

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