



## FORCE COMMUNITY LEARNING 2016

The project took place in open spaces adjacent to the River Crane, Twickenham with the aim of introducing local people to conservation skills –aquatic marginal planting, the restoration of instream deflectors, plus a variety of traditional techniques aimed at improving access to the riverside spaces and increase biodiversity – including woodland management and coppicing, hedge laying and hedge management, scything and grassland management. The sessions aim to build the skills of volunteers and make cumulative improvements to the river corridor.

We aim to foster links between individuals of all ages and the environment, raise awareness of local open spaces and provide learners with conservation skills and knowledge. The sessions were mixed ability, including some people with no experience of environmental conservation.

TCV (The Conservation Volunteers), experts in conservation management who also know the river corridor well, led all the sessions. The project was managed by FORCE in partnership with Richmond Council Parks Department.

The community learning sessions are complementary to the practical monthly conservation sessions run by FORCE. They promote a healthy lifestyle, support environmental activity in local communities by the local community, keep alive heritage crafts and stimulate new generations to learn these skills. They also have the potential to provide the launch pad for careers in landscape management. We also hope that the project will increase our understanding of local people's needs and aspirations for their local green spaces.

### Diary of activities 2016

TCV Lead - Andy Flegg

Number of sessions =13

Average number of volunteers / session = 8.7

Number of volunteer hours =599 hours

Length of hedge maintained = 500m

Area of grassland meadow maintained = 1ha

Maintenance to 3 river deflectors and planting marginal with sedge, flag iris, water mint & marsh marigold.

## Hedge laying



Crane Park hedge we continued to lay hedge from last year's finish point.

8/01/2016, Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 10 Volunteer Hours: 50
03/02/2016, Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 10 Volunteer Hours: 50
11/02/2016, Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 10 Volunteer Hours: 50
17/02/2016, Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 7 Volunteer Hours: 35



## River deflectors and marginal planting

### River deflectors and marginal planting.



- Repaired damaged deflectors from high water and new section by reed bed.
- created some dead hedges in areas where dogs had damaged the vegetation at the river bank in order to discourage them from further doing this.
- planted marginal (sedge, flag iris, water mint & marsh marigold)

20/04/2016, Crane Park (Hanworth Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 7 Volunteer Hours: 35
27/04/2016, Crane Park (Hanworth Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 7 Volunteer Hours: 35
04/05/2016, Crane Park (Hanworth Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 8 Volunteer Hours: 40
18/05/2016, Crane Park (Hanworth Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 6 Volunteer Hours: 24
25/05/2016, Crane Park (Hanworth Road Entrance)	Number of volunteers: 7 Volunteer Hours: 35

## Scything and meadow management



Richard “bugman” Jones joined TCV volunteers scything the Mill Road meadows to advise how the site should be managed for biodiversity. The highlight of his visit was finding a nationally rare “red data book” species, *Gymnosoma rotundatum*



Three days of scything at Mill Road meadows

Richmond Green Gym cut the hay in the Meadway using scythes, following training by TCV.

20/7/16 Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	8 volunteers Volunteer Hours: 40
27/07/16 Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	7 volunteers Volunteer Hours: 35
03/08/16 Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	9 volunteers Volunteer Hours: 45
10/08/16 Crane Park (Mill Road Entrance)	17 volunteers: Volunteer Hours: 85



FORCE trustees would like to thank our project partner The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and all volunteers who took part in the community learning sessions this year. We would also like to thank the officers of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Parks and Open Spaces for their support.

Trustees are grateful to the Heathrow Community Fund who funded the activities this year.

Frances Bennett  
Trustee  
FORCE  
December 2016



**FORCE**  
Friends of the River Crane Environment



**Heathrow Community Fund**

