



Friends Of the River Crane Environment

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our summer 2010 newsletter. Thank you to all of our members who have renewed their membership – those few who have not will have received a final reminder with this newsletter. We are pleased to report that renewal rates continue to be around 85 per cent and our numbers remain stable at around 400 members. Much of our influence comes from our membership and we are very grateful for your continued support.

### Crane Valley Park – Priority Parks

We anticipate that a considerable amount of work on the ground will be starting in the next few months, following the bird-nesting season. This work will focus on **improving the entrances and access routes** through the park and much of it will be in the Hounslow side of Crane Park, which, although a wonderful area of natural woodland, has suffered from considerable neglect over the last thirty years. A **new cycle route** will be installed through this part of the park and a considerable amount of **tree works** will be done to improve its appearance and environmental value. FORCE has engaged a tree specialist and provided advice to the councils on the way these works are implemented and we are hopeful the results will provide both **community and environmental benefits**.

There will also be work on the Richmond Upon Thames side of the park, developing **woodland glades and riverside vistas**, whilst retaining and enhancing the environmental value of the park. A certain amount of disruption will be inevitable whilst this work is ongoing but we hope this will be minimised, and the principles of low impact improvements and retention and re-use of materials within the park will be applied.

### Kneller Gardens

We are very pleased that the **pavilion** in Kneller Gardens **opened on 15th July** and incorporates a **café**, operated by **Richmond Youth Partnership (RYP)**, showers and public toilets. The toilets will be opened from 9:00am to 6:00pm. The café will be open from 10:00am to 6:00pm (apart from Mondays). It will serve breakfasts, hot and cold drinks and pizzas throughout the day. RYP is planning to use locally sourced food in the café. These are very exciting developments, providing a new active hub within the Crane valley with opportunities for more activities for all the community.

### Activities for Young People

Richmond Council **Play Rangers** will be in the Kneller Gardens on **Fridays from 10:30pm to 12:30pm** throughout the summer holidays. In addition, Play Rangers will be holding **"Go Wild" sessions at Mereway Nature Park** on **Fridays from 2:30pm to 4:30pm** every Friday over the school summer holidays. "Go Wild" sessions will focus on **playing in a natural environment**. With this in mind, please ensure that legs are covered up to minimise scratches and stings. Play Ranger activities are aimed at **children from 8 to 14 years**. RYP will also provide youth workers to supervise activities for **young people aged from 11 to 25 years**.

### EDF

Please note that there is work scheduled by **EDF in Kneller Gardens and throughout Crane Park** this summer and next. This will inevitably cause a significant amount of disruption and we are still in discussion with EDF about how this may be mitigated. Top of our list is the **removal** of the ugly and now **disused cable bridges** that cross both the DNR and the footpath beneath the railway in Mereway. EDF are resisting this at present but we hope that further pressure from the council and ourselves will help to deliver this significant improvement.

This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



### Mayday Genealogy

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**My River Crane – Exhibition**

The exhibition is continuing to tour around Richmond Upon Thames and Hounslow. It is currently at the **shot tower** and will move to **Twickenham Library** in August and **Feltham library** in September, finishing at **Orleans Gallery** in early October. Thanks to everyone who has uploaded their own images of the Crane valley on to the flickr web-site that is accompanying the exhibition. We **welcome all photos** of the River Crane and local green spaces, please continue to put them onto [www.flickr.com/groups/myrivercrane/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/myrivercrane/) or e-mail them to [myrivercrane@force.org.uk](mailto:myrivercrane@force.org.uk) and we will select some of the best images for display at Orleans Gallery in October.

**Hospital Bridge Road**

You may have noticed the **sandy areas** that have appeared on both sides of Hospital Bridge Road. These have been planned by the council as **wild flower areas** and following recent rain there has been some success. The council remains hopeful that these will develop, and will be managed as colourful meadow areas in the years to come.

**The Outdoor Class Room**

We are very excited about this project, developing lesson plans for junior schools to use Kneller Gardens and Mereway Nature Park across the curriculum from **maths to music, English to history**. We are working together with **local schools**, teachers and children and have already tested plans with children from Trafalgar School. Further testing and a roll out to local schools will follow in the autumn term.

**Twickenham Future**

The council has recently launched a **consultation exercise**, seeking ideas for how Twickenham may develop over the next five to ten years. FORCE is putting forward our ideas for improving and developing the network of green spaces along the Crane valley, linking Twickenham station to Hounslow Heath and improving the links along the Duke of Northumberland's River.

We encourage our members to engage with this exercise and views can be submitted at <http://tinyurl.com/3afkfx> . Any support for our ambitions for the Crane valley would be particularly welcome.

FORCE has also submitted responses to the **Twickenham Station proposals**. The broader impacts of the buildings and associated traffic are not within our remit, but we have pushed hard for links to be provided along the Crane valley, both upstream and downstream, as part of any development.

**FORCE Open Day**

Finally, we would like to remind all our members that the eighth **annual FORCE Open Day** will be held on the afternoon of **Sunday 12th September**. All the usual events will be there, starting with the **dog show** at Kneller Gardens at 1:30pm, and everyone as always is welcome. All offers of help either beforehand or on the day will be readily accepted. Additionally, any donations of items for **raffle prizes** would be very welcome

Kind regards,

Rob Gray, Chair, on behalf of FORCE

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