

Dear Friends

Welcome to our spring 2015 newsletter – and a big thank you to everyone who voted for the Duke of Northumberland's River project. We received 1754 votes in total, making it the third most popular project across London, and as a result the project will receive £157,500 – which is matched against at least £250,000 further funding from the two councils and other interested parties.

There is more about the DNR improvement proposals below along with updates on other projects and a comprehensive list of summer events.

The Duke's River Project

FORCE is part of the steering group to manage this project, which will also include Hounslow and Richmond boroughs alongside Crane Valley Partnership, The Environment Agency and The Isleworth Society. We are currently scoping the project and would love to receive suggestions from you on how to improve the Duke's River



The Duke of Northumberland's River

Citizen Crane Project

We are pleased to say that this project has now received funding for a second year of operation, with teams of volunteers monitoring invertebrates and water quality every month at 12 sites up and down the river. We have also extended the project to include a pilot investigation on the condition of drainage outfalls.

The Zoological Society of London is running a training day for the project on Saturday 30th May at the Tower in Crane Park – and this is open to anyone wishing to get involved. To book a place contact Joe.Pecorelli@zsl.org

Donkey Wood and Brazil Mill

We have been supporting LB Hounslow and TCV in improvement works to these two sites, upstream of Feltham Marshalling Yards, for the last couple of years. We have now produced a leaflet that includes a large scale map of the sites alongside information on their history and environmental value.

This is the fourth in a series of maps we have helped to produce for the Lower Crane, and we will shortly be starting work on a fifth for the Duke of Northumberland's River. Copies of all these will be available at our events as listed below. We are also running an archaeological walk at this site on 16th May.

Twickenham Sorting Office & Station Sites

The new buildings are taking shape on the old sorting office site – and we have seen images from the developer of how the riverside plaza will look – with more bankside vegetation added at our request. The path through Twickenham Rough, which will transfer into public use as part of this project, remains on target to open in January 2016.



FORCE has also joined a new liaison group for the station re-development. Our focus will be on the new riverside pathway and open space proposed to link the station with Moorhead Park. When completed, in 2018, this will provide a riverside walkway linking St Margarets and Twickenham Station to the rest of the Crane valley.

This Newsletter is funded for FORCE by: -



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Richmond College development

A scheme is due to be submitted as an outline planning application in May. We remain very concerned about the scheme as it stands, specifically the impact upon the Crane corridor of losing public access to the Craneford East Field alongside increased demands on the one remaining public open space in the area from more housing and students. We have set out our concerns to the development consortium, which includes Richmond council, but have yet to see any significant proposals to assess or mitigate the impact for local people and the riverside environment.

Poppy Beds and Wild Flower Meadows

We have been working with Richmond council and Heathfield and Trafalgar schools to create new poppy meadows in Crane Park – look out for them later in the summer. We can also report that Richmond council is re-doing the very popular wild flower meadows in Crane Park as perennial meadows. There is a further new meadow in Kneller Gardens adjacent to the river and railway.



The poppy meadow team from
Trafalgar School

Crane Valley survey

We will be undertaking our twice annual survey of visitor numbers on Sunday 12th July. This survey, carried out over the last three years, has proved immensely helpful in understanding more about the numbers of people using the Crane valley – information that can be used in discussions about resources and funding. We cannot do these surveys without the support of volunteers so - if you are able to help for a couple of hours on this day all you need to do is count people as they pass!- Please let us know via e-mail or telephone.

Volunteer Days and other Events

We have been working in Crane Park on our last two volunteer days, improving the environmental value of the areas around Butts Farm and the outdoor classroom in the western part of the park.

In May we will visit Silverhall Park in Isleworth with the Friends there – delivering environmental improvements at the start of the Duke's River project. In June we will be joining volunteer groups up and down the river on the annual big balsam bash – and this will be followed by a barbecue at Twickenham Rifle Club for all our members.

A rich programme of walks and talks has started with water vole and bird walks, plus an exploration of the Duke's River in the last month. These events are all free but we ask that you register at info@force.org.uk if coming along.

We have listed all the upcoming events on the attached sheet. Please come and find us at one or more of these and let us have your thoughts and ideas about the Crane valley.

New Trustees

We are always on the lookout for members who would like to become Trustees or otherwise become more engaged in the work we are doing. We are particularly interested in people with an interest in marketing and legal issues – but all support to help with our workload would be welcome. Please drop us a line and we can meet for a chat.

Membership Renewal

The time has come to renew FORCE memberships and renewal details – or confirmation of standing orders – are included with this newsletter. It is wonderful how many people do renew their membership (increasingly by standing order) and we are pleased to say that our membership total remains strong at 530. We are very grateful for your continued support.

Regards,

Rob Gray,

Chair of FORCE



FORCE Volunteer Days and Activity Programme

| Date | Location | Activities |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| 10 th May* | Silverhall Park in Isleworth 10.30am | FORCE Volunteer Day in partnership with the Friends of Silverhall Park |
| 16 th May | Staines Road entrance, Donkey Wood 11am | Walk & Talk Archaeology of Donkey Wood Catherine Edwards, AOC Archaeology |
| 25 th May | Twickenham Green from 10am til 3pm | HANDS May Fair – FORCE has a stall |
| 27 th May | Dragonfly Terrace Crane Park 11am | Walk & Talk Memory walk for older people |
| 30 th May | Shot Tower 11am to 4pm | Citizen Crane training day With Joe Pecorelli and Rob Gray |
| 14 th June* | Catchment wide balsam bash. FORCE group to meet at Hospital Bridge Road at 10-30am | Big Balsam Bash Balsam removal and planting along lower Crane. Followed by the end of season BBQ at Twickenham Rifle Club |
| 19 th June | Mill Road, Crane Park 12 noon | Walk & Talk Tree Identification with Andrew Flegg |
| 27 th June | Dragonfly Terrace, Crane Park 10.30am | Walk & Talk How Local Green Spaces Link Together Rob Gray |
| 4 th July | Dragonfly Terrace, Crane Park 10.30am | Walk & Talk Gunpowder Mills and Market Gardening in Crane Park Katy Cox & Chris Hern |
| 12 th August | Dragonfly Terrace, Crane Park 1pm | Cycle Ride for families |
| 11 th September | Dragonfly Terrace, Crane Park 7.30pm | Walk & Talk Bat Walk – Alison Fure |

*FORCE volunteer events start at 10-30am; join us for an hour or the whole day. Hot drinks are provided but bring a packed lunch if staying the day. Please wear stout shoes or boots and old clothes.