



Friends of the River Crane Environment

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Annual Review 2017

Message from the Chair

Welcome to our annual review for the year to April 2017. This provides an overview of our main activities during the last financial year and an indication of the breadth and depth of the work we are doing. We are all volunteers and our work is only possible due to the great efforts of Trustees, members and a wide network of partners – so a big thank you for everything you have done over the last year. We are always on the lookout for new volunteers and partners so please contact us if you are interested in being more involved. More details of our activities throughout the year are available on our web-site and through our Facebook and Twitter accounts – links to all below.

Rob Gray - Chair of FORCE



Projects 2016-2017 – Duke’s River Walk



Funding of improvements to the Lower Duke of Northumberland’s River was received from Big Green Fund 2 and Local Authority Section 106 funds. FORCE has been involved in a steering group to implement the project, which has delivered environmental improvements to sites on the Duke’s River including Mereway Nature Park, Riverside Walk and Silverhall Park. Work included enhancements for water voles, and surveys of both water voles and bats. In addition, FORCE worked with TCV to remove around 20 tonnes of rubbish from the river. New and improved paths have been installed in both LB Richmond and LB Hounslow and much of the route is now greatly improved with large increase in visitor numbers. A new leaflet, showing the route and detailing its historical and environmental importance has been distributed, with a total of 8000 copies produced



Duke’s River Walk emblem designed by local school children in a competition. It will be used on way markers to denote the route

Work with local schools

FORCE developed a project with 15 Year 6 pupils from Trafalgar Junior School examining the history and ecology of the Mill Road site in Crane Park. The pupils studied maps, current road names and the current site to see what remnants that could find in situ. The subsequent exhibition has been at Twickenham Museum since October 2016.



The Mystery Mill



An exhibition by Trafalgar Junior School which explores the history of Fulwell Mill and Mill Road, Twickenham

Projects 2016-2017 – Richmond Green Gym

FORCE supported TCV in their Green Gym programme by providing administrative support to the Hounslow Green Gym in Pevensey Nature Reserve and funding through a grant award to establish a Green Gym based in Richmond at the Meadway orchard and Mereway Nature Park. This programme offered weekly conservation work together with supervised exercise. It ended after 7 months as further funding for the project was not forthcoming. FORCE is very pleased that the Richmond Green Gym programme has been re-instated in September 2017 following further funding becoming available.



Richard “bugman” Jones joined TCV volunteers scything the Mill Road meadows to advise how site management.

Community and Education



FORCE delivered a series of 12 workshops in partnership with TCV and taught traditional conservation skills – hedge laying, marginal planting and scything which involved 600

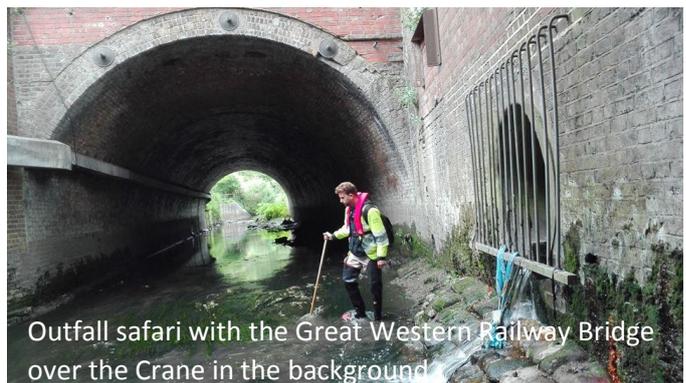
hours of activities. We are pleased to have secured new funding over the next 2 years for the continuation of these workshops.

In partnership with London Wildlife Trust, FORCE led a programme of 23 guided walks through the Crane Valley attended by 327 people, including 65 children.

The Citizen Crane project

This is a partnership between FORCE with ZSL and Frog Environmental which started in 2013. Around 50 citizen science volunteers have been trained to undertake monthly sampling at eleven sites along the river catchment to measure the ecological and chemical quality of the river in time and space. Three years of data have been gathered and a Year Three report produced. The project has received three years further funding from Thames Water up until April 2020.

The project has helped to identify six significant pollution incidents. The project has supported and helped to prioritise Thames Water’s misconnections programme for the catchment and prioritise Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes in Harrow. A volunteer “outfall safari” in 2016 identified over 200 surface water outfalls across the catchment, and prioritised a dozen that were of concern. Other catchment partnerships across London are now starting to adopt and develop these approaches.



Outfall safari with the Great Western Railway Bridge over the Crane in the background

Planning

FORCE tracked planning applications along the lower Crane Valley and has been actively involved in negotiating environmental and community benefits on a number of key sites, including: in LB Richmond: Local Plan, Twickenham Brewery Wharf site, Twickenham Station site, Rugby Football Union site, Harlequin Football Club and Richmond College sites, and village planning proposals; LB Hounslow; at Hounslow Heath, Feltham Marshalling Yards, Green Lane floodlighting proposals, the West Area Plan and Feltham Masterplan. FORCE seeks net benefits to the environment and community from any development so that there are incremental improvements on the ground.

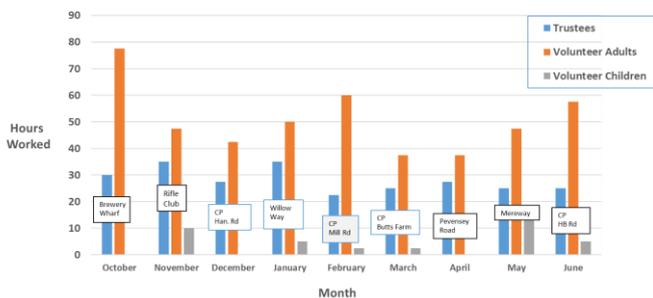


Volunteer day in Twickenham Junction Rough with St James Brewery Wharf developer.

Volunteering



FORCE Volunteer Sunday Hours Worked 2016 - 2017



Volunteer Sundays 2016-2017: Key features

- 9 different locations visited
- 750 hours worked
- Previous years 615/645
- First event to be held at Twickenham Junction Rough
- Amount of rubbish collected

	Plastic	Cans	Glass	Recycle total (kg)	None recycle (kg)	Rubbish total (kg)
Total	348	780	193	175	400	575

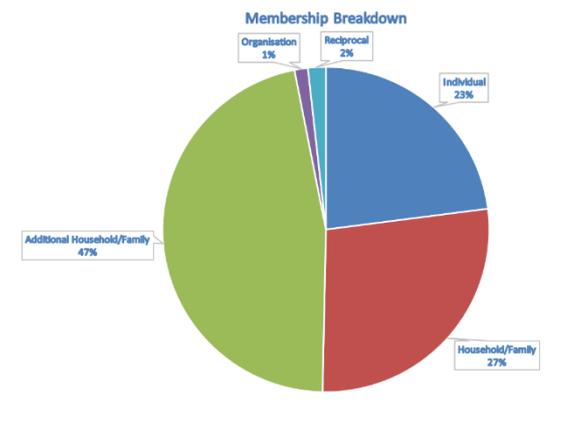
With thanks

Trustees would like to thank members and the following organisations for their support and generosity over the last year:



Membership

As at 31st March 2017 FORCE membership stood at 453, a fall of 13.5% in membership. This is largely due to the change of bank account during the year which resulted in the loss of some members who had previously renewed by standing order. We wrote to all members to inform them of the change. Over the 13 years we have been operating, we calculate that an average of about six members per year had moved away without informing us of a change of address. Notwithstanding this, 77% of members renewed their membership by the end of the year, and there were 47 new members over the year. It is very encouraging to note that since the end of March the membership has climbed back to 480 as at the beginning of September.



We have introduced a facility to allow new members to sign up and pay their subscriptions entirely on-line via the FORCE website. Three newsletters were produced and distributed to FORCE members.

Financial Summary

FORCE's funds in hand totalled £16 592 at 31st March 2017 compared to £26 272 the previous year. The funds are divided between unrestricted funds of £14 828 and restricted funds of £1664. The Charity is free to use its unrestricted funds as it wishes, provided it acts within its Objects. Restricted funds can only be used for specific projects- a restriction set by the body that grants the funds.

The table alongside summarises FORCE's income and expenditure in the year. A full copy of the Annual Report and Financial Statements, approved by the Trustees can be viewed on our website www.force.org.uk

All numbers £	Unrestricted	Restricted
Income		
Subscriptions	1620	
Donations	2359	
Gift Aid	692	
Bank Interest	7	
Reimbursements / Grants	3946	12960
Total Income	8624	12960
Expenditure		
Charitable Activities	4801	26073
Governance/Bank Charges	489	
Total Expenditure	5290	26073
Surplus (Deficit) for Year	3334	-13,113
Brought Forward Funds	11494	14777
Carried Forward Funds	14828	1,664

The results reflect a successful year with an encouraging increase in unrestricted funds which can be used to expand the Charity's work. The reduction in restricted funds largely reflects expenditure from grants given in the previous year.

In addition to the reported financial income FORCE's trustees invested about 5000 voluntary hours in developing and delivering projects. This equates to £125k gift in kind, some of which is used as match funding for projects. This is in addition to the estimated 1500 hours' time given by Trustees to governance.

The Trustees are very grateful to Anna Smyk for her dedicated voluntary work as the Charity's Assistant Treasurer and bookkeeper.

Contact FORCE



www.force.org.uk



info@force.org.uk



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www.youtube.com/channel/UCaasHyZO2bzQngLrOrw6dw