

FORCE PRESS RELEASE
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A carved woodpecker bench has been installed on Cranford Recreation Ground next to the River Crane in Twickenham by the Friends of River Crane Environment (FORCE). This is the latest of many small scale improvements to the area around Twickenham Rifle Club and the playing fields of Heatham Estate promoted by FORCE and the bench is now a focal point for the area.

This bench is the second in a proposed series featuring species and habitats found along the River Crane and follows the much loved “Fox bench”, installed on Mereway Nature Park in 2006. Both benches were produced by Paul Sivell, a self taught wood carver and sculptor who specialises in turning dead, damaged or fallen trees into sculptural features. Paul is based on the Isle of Wight, and has also produced a number of works for Kew Gardens. Two further benches in the series are planned for riverside locations in Crane Park, subject to successful funding applications from FORCE.

Rob Gray, Chair of FORCE, said “These benches are lovely pieces in their own right and of practical benefit to walkers and picnickers. We hope that they will also help to create links in the public imagination between various sites along the River Crane and illustrate the valuable species and habitats they contain”.

Funding for the bench was thanks to the Richmond Civic Trust, a local charity which aims to support local community and voluntary groups working to preserve and enhance the natural and built environment within the borough of Richmond. It was additionally funded by Gurbux Singh, in memory of his wife Jagdish who died recently whilst visiting family in Canada. Pictured are Gurbux and members of his family, long time residents of Whitton and FORCE members, admiring the bench.

FORCE is a local charity with over 400 members, working to protect and enhance the River Crane corridor. More information on the charity and its work can be found at www.force.org.uk