



MINUTES – action points are in red

Meeting Tidal Crane Association 2017 AGM

Date/venue Thursday 30th November, 89 Haliburton Rd, 7.30pm

Present Martyn Day, Hilary Thomson, Cris Edgell, Carolyn Bloor, Richard Bloor, Ursula Lehnert, Paul Needham, Frances Bennett (FORCE)

Chaired by Chris Edgell

Apologies: Roberto Coladangelo, Gary Pond, Lin Cordoray, Laurence Mann, Roseanne Foster, Surya Cooper

Introductions: Frances Bennett from FORCE ([Friends of River Crane Environment](#)), invited to attend to give an update on current Crane projects upriver from TCA and which affect us and/or are of interest.

Frances' update

By way of background, FORCE has c500 members, is 15 yrs old. She doesn't recommend ever changing banks as you are likely to 'lose' standing orders! Formal membership gives clout in the community and the organisation is seen to be democratic. It is a volunteer led organisation. Statutory bodies like this. 2017 was a good year and a number of things have come together. (Frances brought a number of FORCE leaflets along including the one that showed their very first vision). Projects which have come to fruition: new pathway from Twickenham: path from the station to Moormead shown as 'proposed' is being developed. Other missing bit at other end at de Broome Playing Fields will be opened. Agreed another map should be done – from current end at Moormead to the Thames, possibly to include the newly opened riverside walk through the Convent development. See also [Three River Walk](#) – it could be part of this.

Martyn: we had history walk which was v well attended. Also, although final stretch of Crane to Thames is not a right of way on foot, it is by boat as it is a tidal river – this is an important point and could be included on a map.

Frances: we are doing 2 walks a month at the moment. If TCA wants to hold a walk they will help promote it – if interested let her know, they just need someone to lead it.

Hilary: T21 could help with a walk that gets us in the river – our summer history walk along the river for River Celebration Day was very popular.

Hilary to provide Martyn's contact details to Frances to organise walk. DONE

Other map Frances brought is Duke's River map, partly funded by Hounslow and also Section 106 money. This walk from Crane Park/Kneller Gardens to Isleworth has new interpretation boards and waymarkers. Trying to make waymarking signs on this river walk. Launch in near future.

Rob's Citizen Crane project is ongoing – FORCE keeps keep finding pollution incidents including unexplained water pollution. Hoping Thames Water will give pot of money to investigate this further.

FORCE are involved in objecting to the proposal to de-designate Hounslow's green belt. Can we respond. Response must be made by 10th Dec. **Hilary to send out info asap (info received). DONE**

Low Flow project: improvements at Mogden mean the D of Northumberland's River doesn't need as much water for water treatment. We are now testing to see what is possible. Last summer the Crane upriver from us had virtually no flow for e months. There are little weirs but even the little ponds these create dry up almost completely in low flow/dry weather. Fine tuning is still going on with Mereway weir. It will need adjustment. There are 4 monitoring stations in lower Crane to monitor and fine tune this process in coming year.

Hilary to work with EA to establish what monitoring we will be doing at our end of the Crane including taking photos from un-overlooked bits of river such as bottoms of gardens on tidal Crane. ONGOING

Carolyn asked about Heathrow – Frances said water that goes into balancing ponds is poor quality. They are working on existing ponds and building new **reservoir(s)?** In fact this was one reason the Citizen Crane project started off.

All thanked Frances for coming along.

All: for more about FORCE's nature conservation work, nature reserves and walks along the Crane, D of Northumberland's and Thames, go to <https://www.force.org.uk/discover/> where there are downloadable maps.

Approval of previous Minutes.

All approved.

40th Anniversary River Celebration Day 2017 – report and feedback.

Martyn: the weather was not kind but the day was a success, was well attended and everyone had a good time.

Hilary: had email from Roberto Coladangelo who said the River Dipping for children was very much appreciated and he hoped it would be a regular feature.

Carolyn: loved the reunion. She showed photos of the 'clearers of 1977' reunited in her garden at the 40th anniversary Tea Party. They all thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Those who couldn't make the event can see a short writeup [here](#) and there is a photo album of the day [here](#) (nb 2 pages of pics).

Hilary to add Carolyn's reunion pics to this album.

Boat ownership and boat survey.

All said the more using the river the better. Hilary said boat survey during March 2017 showed 27 boats on the tidal Crane either moored in river or on adjacent bank. There may be more in sheds and boat houses. Roberto Coladangelo also mentioned he thought boat ownership was growing and that there are now 3 'Whaly' Classics and 2 other Whalys. He has been paddleboarding and his neighbour now has a paddleboard: this could get more people onto the water as it is less of an investment/commitment than a boat.

Other projects TCA is involved with

Northcote Nature Reserve - Hilary said it is going ahead, funding in place, inaugural tree planting event on Sunday, all welcome.

Eel watch. Cris said he and Lin check eel boxes on a regular basis. Generally see 4-10cm long eels. Eels live up to 30/35 years. Go back from sea to fresh water. Go to Sargasso Sea to breed – when get to UK still v small. Not sure why not many on Crane while there are thousands on Wandle. Joe Pecorelli's Eel Watch project is now on every single tributary of Thames. **Hilary to send out report provided by Lin Cordoray (who takes part in this project) with Minutes.** Eel numbers are picking up.

Wild Flower survey: identified 53 species of wild flowers/aquatic plants. We found the majority of plants listed in the 1990 Ecological Survey which gained the tidal Crane its Site of Metropolitan Importance designation, plus many more which may also have been present then.

Hilary to send our report to Tasha Hunter, Ecology Officer at LBRUT. Also to GIGL (Greenspace Information for Greater London – the capital;'s environmental records centre) via Colin Cooper.

Frances: there is grant funding available for planting wild flowers – can apply for 3 or 4K. The idea is to know what is native to the local patch. She can share information on this.

Hilary to check with Tasha about situation regarding review of Site of Metropolitan Importance as LBH do not have ecology officer at present

Recent mini river-clear on Crane in allotments: this was well attended by residents who live along that stretch and several blockages of branches/leaves/trapped rubbish were cleared.

Carolyn said river was much wider in previous years and some owners had boats.

Hilary: you can still see some boats in gardens. Lower Crane Restoration should at the very least improve the flow and ecology of the river. However large tree blocking river near A316 needs moving: she is discussing this with EA.

Website: we have a website which now has a fair amount of information including photo albums (archive and more recent events). www.e-voice.org.uk/tca/

Frances: FORCE always happy to publicise our events.

Cris: Kezia could help with the website and social media when Hilary steps down.

Flyer (funded by Inspire Hounslow). **Hilary to circulate a new draft of this over winter** – we have the £500 from Inspire Hounslow and have a quote for printing 1000 flyers for this.

Hilary: this might be a point to consider online (free) membership. Could this be discussed at a separate meeting?

Frances: it holds weight if you are constituted and the numbers you have hold weight with planning departments.

River Celebration Day 2018 – discussion

Martyn – could we tie river with Armistice 1918 event. Paul Needham – swords were made in old Isleworth. To be discussed.

Carolyn: suggests Martyn talks to John Rosso, furniture restorer, who worked for Phelps in St Margs, grew up in Percy Rd.

Carolyn to give his tel no to Martyn.

Hilary – we could do interview with him for website. He knew about Christine Keiler!

Carolyn – glass in gardens is explained by glasshouses for market gardens.

River Dipping – Roberto liked, Annie Rowse's grandchildren and Carolyn really enjoyed.

Agreed to hold informal meeting in March to discuss exactly what we will be doing and how, on River Celebration Day.

Hilary to send out possible dates nearer the time. Need to take Tide Tables!
CAROLYN WILL DO THIS

Invasive species – update

Hilary: EA have said it is their intention to continue to spray but they are keen that we recruit volunteers to be trained up to complement this process. She thinks this would be difficult because of all the individual properties involved. **PAUL NEEDHAM HAS VOLUNTEERED TO BE TRAINED AND TO LEAD THIS GOING FORWARD.**

Outfalls/pollution – update

We now have named Thames Water contact for reporting problems and an idea of how to proceed with this. Possibly have separate meeting with Catherine to discuss.

Fallen trees

Some trees pollarded by LBH.

Robert Coladangelo has suggested a cutting back of foliage at some point over winter as it is getting difficult to get boats under it.

Martyn – to do it properly need to get up trees. Disagreement about this. Most felt just need to cut a path.

Martyn to contact man who owns large overhanging willow to find out if it would be possible to get up tree to remove branches. DONE

Cris – it is a wider conversation about tree ownership/expectation.

Martyn: Scout group allowed access for tree pruning a while ago, good example of clearing.

All said too many grey squirrels!

Treasurer's Report (Ursula Lehnert)

Ursula gave a summary. We have £595.62 in bank of which we need to spend £500 on leaflet.

Carolyn – could we do our own map? Or could we revisit doing interpretation boards? We could do one on Percy Rd?

Martyn – could do first one on Railshead Bridge on main road. Could refer to boatyard, pottery. Carolyn: could do Turner views (Carolyn knows of another sketch in Tate – ask her for details). Northcote Rd bridge – re nature reserve.

Hilary to check what is planned for Northcote Nature Reserve interpretation board(s) especially at entrance.

Membership – all agreed it was better to set up a non-personal email from the TCA, rather than use personal email.

Someone to set up Gmail email account for TCA. DONE

Election of officers

Chair
Vice Chair
Secretary
Treasurer

Treasurer: Ursula agreed to stand again and this was proposed and seconded.

Hilary thanked Cris who is stepping down as Chair. Also Roseanne who is stepping down as Vice Chair – special mention of her invaluable connections at London Wildlife which enabled us to do the Wild Flower Survey. All thanked them both for their hard work.

Carolyn: could we link recruitment to river celeb day meeting?

Cris: for the vacant roles we should parcel up what needs doing as it could be split among several people.

Martyn: NSMRA makes projects the focus of their activity and doesn't have as much focus on admin and meetings.

Ursula thanked Hilary, who is stepping down as Secretary.

Cris and Hilary said they will caretake until replacements are found.

Carolyn can help with organising River Celebration Day and is happy to do door knocking.

Carolyn suggests a second meeting. Make it a planning meeting for planning river celebration day. Look at 2018 River Celebration Day – need more people to help us, not arduous. Maybe weave in people from new 'natural Crane' group who took part in recent river clearing? Have a meeting in March.

Martyn – could do it as a boat day? Set date and a tide. Have food and drink.

Cris – will continue to do bats, ecology etc. Can caretake. Chair role is simple.

A date was agreed for an initial meeting: 25th Jan at Carolyn and Richard's mini Burns night. We can discuss membership and recruitment and a River Celebration Day planning meeting for March, in more detail. MEETING HELD.

The AGM finished at 10.30pm