

# SEEDS OF CHANGE PROJECT

## NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2017 No 4

Welcome to the fourth newsletter for the project. We aim to highlight outdoor learning projects taking place in parks and open spaces in the London Borough of Richmond.

### Friendly Parks for All

The Friendly Parks for All project aims to improve opportunities for all people in London Borough of Richmond to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment. We aim to work with park users, the environmental sector, and providers of services for the groups that have limited access to the outdoor environments.

Since winter 2016 we have been developing the model of "Friendly Parks for All" on Barnes Green, and Heathfield Recreation Ground. The next park that we are planning to work on is Ham Village Green.

We worked closely with Richmond Dementia Action Alliance to develop recommendations in order to develop the model of a Friendly Park. Work at Barnes Green is now almost complete and includes: improved seating and resting places, a wheelchair accessible picnic table, improved paths, improved access to the pond, entrance/exit markers and a meeting point to aid navigation and help orientate yourself within the park. We are currently developing way finding signage and information boards.

Over the summer of 2017 a series of activities have been held at Barnes Green and Heathfield Recreation Ground. The activities were promoted by partner organisations and the Richmond Council Comms team.

We are now beginning to develop the model on Ham Village Green with the help of the Friends of Ham Village Green.

If you are involved in a similar project, we would love to hear about your experience. Please contact Frances Bennett

[outdoor.learning@outlook.com](mailto:outdoor.learning@outlook.com)

or [parks@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:parks@richmond.gov.uk)



The new meeting point, improved pavements and safer access to the pond at Barnes Green Friendly Park.

An entry/exit marker designed to aid orientation.



The new Friendly Parks for All emblem will be used as a way marker.



## Plans for Heathfield Recreation Ground Friendly Park

Over the last year we have worked in partnership with Richmond College arts students to develop ideas to transform Heathfield Recreation Ground into a Friendly Park that is accessible to everyone. One of the groups that we have been targeting are people with dementia and their carers.

The project was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2017 when the Mayor, Councillor David Linnette, planted a tree in Coronation Avenue to celebrate 80 years since the avenue was planted by school children. He was joined by children from Heathfield Junior School and the local scouts. A replacement plaque has been ordered to include in the original granite plinth which commemorates the occasion. Information boards outlining the history and ecology of the park will also be installed.

The central feature in the park will be a sculpture of an armchair designed by Aleksandra Piechocinska, a student in art and design at Richmond College. The judging panel chose the sculpture because of the symbolism of home and comfort and because they thought that it would appeal to all ages. The sculpture should be in place by Spring 2018 and will be included in a way marked Friendly Parks for All route which will include a number of the sensory features that can be found in the park – including a wild flower meadow area and the trunks of old gnarled trees. Other plans for the park include the installation of additional outdoor gym equipment suitable for older people including those with dementia. The installation of this is dependent on a successful grant funding application. Further engagement activities for people with dementia and their carers in the Friendly Park will begin again in the spring.

### *Fresh air and Friendship: access to nature for local people*

The Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group (EMAG) have partnered with Let's Go Outside and Learn CIC to encourage local people to spend more time in the local parks. In a yearlong project, funded through Richmond Civic Pride and Comic Relief, there is a programme of regular activities open to all. Many of the activities are based in Murray Park, Whitton [www.lgoal.org](http://www.lgoal.org).

Murray Park is home to a **new outdoor chess table** to encourage outdoor activity across all generations.

2 Do you have a similar project? We'd love to hear from you.

### Hounslow Heath Family Outdoor Gym

Grant funding is being sought which would allow us to install new outdoor gym equipment at Hounslow Heath, in Heathfield. This gym equipment will be suitable for family use and we will engage with local families in order to understand what would be suitable for their needs.

## Be active in Richmond Parks

To highlight all the opportunities to be active in parks in the borough we have developed a leaflet "[Friendly Parks for All: be active in Richmond Parks](#)" available on Richmond Council Parks pages.

The leaflet gives information about facilities and activities in parks and open spaces including Health Walks, ParkRun, fitness equipment, conservation volunteering, and the calendar of events maintained by [South West London Environment Network](#)

## Evidence Briefings

Natural England have published evidence briefings for health professionals and policy makers that outline the links between natural environments and mental health (EIN018), learning (EIN017), physical activity, (EIN019) physiological health (EIN020) and obesity (EIN021) [publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6502695238107136](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6502695238107136)

The Seeds of Change project is managed through the London Borough of Richmond Parks Department. It aims to encourage more use of parks and open spaces by local people.

For more information about the Seeds of Change Project see Richmond Council web site Parks Outdoor Learning pages

[www.richmond.gov.uk/parks and open spaces](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/parks-and-open-spaces)

To contact us please email [outdoor.learning@outlook.com](mailto:outdoor.learning@outlook.com) or [parks@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:parks@richmond.gov.uk)

## Richmond Health walks

The Richmond Health Walks are free, organised group walks for people who are currently not very active but would like to increase their physical activity. The weekly programme (now managed through the parks department) can be found on the council website.

[www.richmond.gov.uk/services/wellbeing and lifestyle/health walks](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/wellbeing-and-lifestyle/health-walks)

## Richmond Green Gym

The revived Richmond Green Gym run by the Conservation Volunteers (TCV) started in September 2017. TCV's Green Gym® is an innovative way to get physically active and make a difference to the local environment through conservation volunteering. The Green Gym is based at Kneller Gardens, Twickenham meets on a weekly basis.

All volunteers regardless of experience or levels of fitness are welcome. Experienced leaders start and finish sessions with a few minutes of gentle exercises and stretches to get muscles warmed up and reduce the risk of injury. There are healthy refreshments and a chance to get to socialise with other participants.

For more information contact Chloe 07717494476 or [gg-richmond@tcv.org.uk](mailto:gg-richmond@tcv.org.uk)

## Volunteer Nature Buddies

Volunteer Nature Buddies are currently being recruited to provide a sustainable means of delivering activities for groups such as people with dementia and their carers.

Let's Go Outside and Learn CIC are coordinating this and also running small projects with other community groups such as EMAG. [www.lgoal.org](http://www.lgoal.org)

