

SEEDS OF CHANGE PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017

Seeds of Change Project

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

Friendly Parks for All

We are working with a number of organisations, to develop the concept of “friendly parks” using Barnes Green and Heathfield Recreation Ground as our pilot sites. Following a detailed assessment of barriers to the use of parks by people with dementia and their carers, hard landscaping to improve access is currently being put in place at Barnes Green. New features will include a meeting place totem pole, distinctive carvings at the main entrances, and specially designed way markers to guide you around the park. New benches, a “chatty chair” and improved access to the pond are also included in the scheme. At Heathfield Recreation Ground, where we are working with the art and design students at Richmond College, to include new features for people with dementia.

There will be programme of free activities for people with dementia and their carers based at Barnes Green and Heathfield Recreation Ground for the summer of 2017.



One of the new features at Barnes Green Friendly Park - a “chatty chair”.

DAA
Richmond Dementia
Action Alliance

BE ACTIVE IN RICHMOND PARKS

Be active in Richmond Parks is a new leaflet that highlights how anyone can take exercise in borough parks. From organised runs to conservation work, table tennis to paddling pools it gives information about the facilities and regular activities that are available. [www.richmond.gov.uk/parks and open spaces](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/parks_and_open_spaces)



[Walk this Way with photos.](#)

There are some great parks and open spaces in the borough. We have put together some fun and educational activities to help families and schools enjoy them.

The most recent addition to these downloadable activities include photographs. They have been designed for use with young children, and people with language or communication barriers. You can find them in the outdoor learning pages of the council website.

We hope that the downloadable sheets will encourage local people to develop the habit of spending time getting to know their local park. The sheets provide opportunities to play, learn and explore in the natural environment.

We'd love to hear from you, if you make use of them. [www.richmond.gov.uk/outdoor-learning-in-parks/walk this way.htm](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/outdoor-learning-in-parks/walk-this-way.htm)

Working with Richmond College Art and Design students to create a “Friendly Park” at Heathfield Recreation Ground

Art and design students at Richmond upon Thames College have been working on an innovative scheme to transform Heathfield Recreation Ground into a “Friendly Park for All”. The design brief looks to create distinctive features which will act as a focal point to help with orientation for people with dementia and provide interest for all park users.

The sculpture chosen to be worked up and installed is a huge armchair that symbolises relaxation and home. Other ideas developed by the students will also be included in the park including sensory features, interesting seating and way markers. Everything included will be suitable for use by all users of the park. The judging panel looking at the entries commented that the students have “understanding and awareness towards others that very much contributes to a better community for people living with dementia and their carers to live in and be part of.”

Work on the park will begin in late spring 2017 with planting to commemorate 80 years since Coronation Avenue was planted in the park.

Links between natural environments and human health: DEFRA Evidence Statement March 2017

This evidence statement provides a broad overview of evidence on the links between natural environments and human health. It focuses on the direct benefits to health and wellbeing and concludes that particularly strong links are found in relation to mental health and wellbeing; development of a healthy immune system and reduction of some diseases.

Positive associations are found concerning landscape and the ecosystem, mortality; maternal health and children’s cognitive

development; physical activity, social contact and community cohesion. The evidence is unclear in relation to biodiversity and health; environmental quality; the type of natural environment; exposure mode, duration; the monetary value of benefits; and the effectiveness of policy and interventions.

For the full report see: <https://beyondgreenspace.net/2017/03/09/defra-evidence-statement-on-the-links-between-natural-environments-and-human-health/>

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

For more information about the Seeds of Change Project see

www.richmond.gov.uk/outdoor-learning-in-parks

To contact us please email outdoor.learning@outlook.com or parks@richmond.gov.uk