

SEEDS OF CHANGE PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2016

Seeds of Change Project

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

Dementia Friendly Parks

We are working with a number of organisations, to develop the concept of dementia friendly parks using Barnes Green as our pilot site. So far the project has made a detailed assessment of barriers to the use of parks by people with dementia and their carers through a literature search and developed an audit document to assess these barriers in parks. The audit document considers current accessibility, signage and interpretation and safety considerations.

The next steps for the project is to develop a greater understanding of the use made of parks by people with dementia and their carers, how they would like to make more use of them and what they understand the barriers to be. This valuable information will inform the project and be used as baseline assessment for evaluation. To take part in the consultation see:

<https://consultation.richmond.gov.uk/environment/dementia-friendly-parks> If you are involved in a similar project, we would love to hear about your experience. Please contact Frances Bennett outdoor.learning@outlook.com or parks@richmond.gov.uk

South West London Environment Network (SWLEN) works to build active and engaged communities who protect and enhance our environment. SWLEN work with local Friends of parks, host the Richmond biodiversity partnership and organise the successful annual Springtime Safari for families. This event brings together people and wildlife through environmental education activities. They have an events calendar on their website www.swlen.org.uk/events-calendar/ which lists most of the local events in the borough.



Out of the Woods

Worksheets for Key Stage 1 & 2



Strawberry Woods, a new play park in Stanley Road was opened in July. It includes a woodland walk and natural play equipment.

We are working with the local schools and Stanley Children's and Family Centre to encourage its use as an outdoor classroom to support the curriculum.

Teaching resources for primary schools have been developed for use in this space and other woodland areas in the borough.

The resources entitled "Out of the Woods" can be downloaded from the Outdoor Learning Pages on the Parks website. We would be interested in feedback from anyone making use of them. www.richmond.gov.uk/outdoor-learning-in-parks



“Walk this way” self-guided family visits to parks and open spaces

“Walk this way” provides activities that the whole family can take part in using any park in the borough. We hope that the downloadable sheets will encourage families to develop the habit of spending time together in parks by offering children the opportunity to get to know their local area. The sheets provide opportunities to play, learn and explore in the natural environment. They are available to download free of charge from

[http://www.richmond.gov.uk/walk this way](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/walk_this_way)

A recent study by Natural England looking at visits to the “natural environment” by children found that there were strong links between adult and child visiting behaviours. In households where the adults were frequent visitors to the natural environment, most children were also frequent visitors. In households where the adults rarely or never visited the natural environment, the proportion of children visiting frequently halved.

There will be free sessions for families during half term. Meet Champions Wharf Wednesday 26th October 2-4pm Booking is not required.

Links between natural environments and learning:

Natural England Briefing Note

Recent briefing papers by the University of Exeter written on behalf of Natural England explores the relationships between nature, health and wellbeing. This briefing focuses on the impacts of learning in natural environments and the impacts of natural environments on learning processes.

The briefing highlights the positive associations between learning in the natural environment and a range of educational, social, developmental, and mental or physical health outcomes. It shows that evidence suggests that a greater amount of natural spaces in

or around the learning environment (e.g. the school) is associated with better emotional, behavioural and learning processes and outcomes. They point to some evidence which suggests that a greater proportion of natural environments around the home are associated with improved learning outcomes.

The briefing note highlights the lack of consideration of the impacts of the use of, or presence of natural environments on inequalities in learning outcomes, or in relation to social justice. It discusses the cost effectiveness of learning in outdoor environments as

well as briefly considering implications for research and policy.

Other briefings in the series cover physical activity, obesity, physiological health, mental health, and connection to nature. To read the report see <https://beyondgreenspace.wordpress.com/2016/07/15/natural-england-evidence-summaries/>

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 or parks@richmond.gov.uk