

SEEDS OF CHANGE PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2015

Seeds of Change Project

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

Walk this way

New outdoor learning resources are available that can be downloaded free of charge from Richmond Council Website. There are Discovery Walks for Families as well as Learning Walks for Schools to use in any of the parks and open spaces in the borough. The walks have been designed so that the Family Walks complement the Learning Walks. They can be found here: http://richmond.gov.uk/home/services/parks_and_open_spaces/outdoor_learning_in_parks/walk_this_way.htm

We are interested receiving feedback on these resources.



Outdoor Learning Consultation Results

In June 2015 we undertook a consultation to understand the general picture of the current provision of outdoor learning in the borough, the geographical distribution of outdoor learning in the borough and how accessible current provision is to residents.

You can read the consultation report and find a list of outdoor learning providers on the parks pages of the Council website.

www.richmond.gov.uk/parks_and_open_spaces



Strawberry Woods

We have recently held a competition to name a new play area on Stanley Road, Twickenham. It is an area of secondary woodland to the west of Strawberry Hill golf course abutting the former Territorial Army Voluntary Reserve (TAVR).

Children and families from nearby schools St James's Catholic Primary School and Stanley Primary school and Stanley Children's and Family Centre suggested names for the new space.

The winning entry, was chosen by Cllr Fleming cabinet member with responsibility for Environment. The new play space will be called Strawberry Woods and is due to open for public use in late May or early June. It will include a woodland walk and play equipment. We are also working with the local school and Children's and Family Centre to encourage its use as an outdoor classroom to support the curriculum.



Dementia Friendly Parks - Barnes Green

We are working with a number of organisations, including the Dementia Action Alliance, the village planning teams and care organisations based in Barnes who work with people with dementia to develop the concept of a Dementia Friendly Park. It is hoped that this concept can be rolled out to other parks once the model has been trialed at Barnes Green.

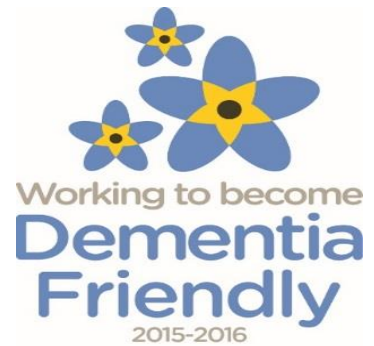
We are currently assessing barriers to the use of the park by people with dementia and their carers. The development of a dementia friendly park will focus on improving on-site accessibility; improving interpretation; improving access from home to green space; introducing led activities and events and minimising risk and ensuring safety.

Advice given by the Dementia Action Alliance is that people with dementia have a need for human presence and the use of parks and open spaces as gathering places used by the local community make them attractive. Dementia Friendly Parks should be easily accessible local community parks rather than parks specially designed for the sole use of people with dementia.

Next steps will aim to investigate how to improve accessibility of parks for people by making them open to a wider range of visitors especially people with dementia, and opening up opportunities for people with dementia to engage in parks at a number of levels - as a passive observer or an active participant.

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 We shall give further updates as the project progresses.



Visits to the natural environment by children: new report

A report by Natural England looking at the use of the natural environment by children found that many children (in London 62%) took frequent visits to the natural environment, but a sizeable minority (12%) never or rarely visited. In an average month, nearly half of all children visited local urban parks (48%).

Every month 75% of all children visited the natural environment with adults from their own household and in households where the adults were frequent visitors to the natural environment, most children (82%) were also frequent visitors. Where the adults rarely (or never) visited the natural environment, the proportion of children visiting frequently halved to 39%. In London most children's visits were to local parks and playgrounds. The visits were important to all groups studied but there were patterns linked to ethnicity and socioeconomic status. For the full report see:

http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/498944/mene-childrens-report-years-1-2.pdf

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

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/parks_and_open_spaces

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