

6.4 Cycle Routes

There is an existing informal cycle route through the entirety of Crane Park, Kneller Gardens and Mereway Nature Park to emerge on Craneford Way, accessing London Road via the suburban road system. This is a popular alternative to the A316 dual carriageway or the busy, and often congested, A305 that passes through central Twickenham. The Cycle Route Implementation and Stakeholder Plan (**CRISP**) for the River Crane Shared Use Route was carried out for Richmond Council, with support from Transport for London, in 2007. The route continued the informal route through Crane Park as far as the River Thames at the Richmond Half Lock crossing point. It is part of the Southwest London Greenways cycle scheme. The CRISP report acknowledged the value of the existing informal route and identified a number of improvements for the route to be formally adopted as a cycling route including:

- Widening of the trackway through Crane Park (but no lighting);
- New raised crossing on Meadway;
- Designation of Kneller Gardens as a cycle route;
- New dedicated cycle way through Kneller Gardens;
- New dedicated cycle bridge across the Duke of Northumberland River and into Mereway;
- Widening of the pathway along the Council depot;
- Closure of the rear access route to the Council depot;
- Re-alignment of the route through Twickenham Junction Rough and along Brewery Lane to Twickenham station

A total of £1.28m of improvement works were costed in the report of January 2007. Further detailed feasibility works have subsequently been carried out and the first stage of the implementation works is due to start in summer 2009. This includes the new pathway through Kneller Gardens, new crossing of the DNR and a new raised crossing of Meadway.

SUSTRANS has identified the River Crane (and then the Grand Union Canal) as its proposed route to link the River Thames with Wembley Stadium in time for the London 2012 Olympics. This would necessitate extending the cycle route westwards and northwards along the Crane through Hounslow. This is part of the GOAL scheme (Greenways for the Olympics and London). This scheme aims to provide traffic free green corridors through parks and open spaces. Linking sections will be through residential streets with priority given to cyclists and pedestrians. LB Hounslow has also indicated its desire to see a new cycle route along its part of the Crane with the potential to link with the Richmond route. In 2008 LB Hounslow agreed a cycle link through Cranford park upstream and is working its way downstream along the Crane and towards Crane Valley Park, as part of the London Greenways scheme.

There is clearly considerable scope for the improvements proposed to be integrated into the Crane Valley Park project.

There is also considerable potential for conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians within the area of Crane Valley Park. This is already an issue of concern for example at Kneller Gardens where it is proposed to introduce a cycle track in a heavily-used park which has a children's playground. These issues are being addressed by LB Richmond through detailed planning and public consultation.

There are potential conflicts on all pedestrian routes between the use and needs of walkers, dog walkers and cyclists. This project seeks to provide for the reasonable needs of each of these users and to encourage the equitable sharing of existing and new routes that optimise the balance between usage, enjoyment and safety.