

“ADULT COLLEGE AS KEY PARTNER FOR RIVER CENTRE”

“The River Centre will be a new type of building, one that serves the whole community but has a specific purpose - to help everyone to understand and enjoy the river”. David Attenborough, River Centre Patron.

The prospect of the former Twickenham Baths site being revitalised to benefit the whole community moved a significant step closer this week with the publication of the business plan for Twickenham River Centre and the announcement of a working partnership with Richmond Adult Community College (RACC) to deliver environmental education from the River Centre.

Rob Gray, the building manager for the River Centre, said:

“The business plan sets out our plans for delivering and then operating the River Centre on a long term basis along with the associated costs and revenues. The plan shows that the River Centre will be self financing and sustainable with a broad base of incomes. The main income source will be the range of environmental education programmes to be offered with RACC. Further income is provided from school visits and community based projects, service charges for office space occupied by local environmental groups and rental for the new café/restaurant.

We’re really encouraged that Richmond Adult Community College shares our confidence in the educational value of the River Centre, particularly in its ability to provide vocational skills for people of all ages. We completed our first joint education project with the College earlier this year, providing healthy nature walks for people with learning difficulties. We will be broadening this programme substantially with the College and our other partners over the next three years, to ensure that a vibrant programme of environmental education for adults and young people of all abilities can be slotted in place when the River Centre opens, scheduled for 2011”.

Jenny Pearce, Chair of the Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames added:

“We’re now working to produce a distinctive River Centre that will re-invent the traditional working riverside for Twickenham, helping more people to enjoy the river all year round. Our patron Sir David Attenborough has written enthusiastically in our recent newsletter about the great opportunity for the River Centre to encourage

everyone's interest in environmental issues, and we're going to live up to that. Everyone is welcome to download the Business Plan and the latest newsletter from our web-site and send in your comments and ideas".

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Notes for editors

- 1 The Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames is lead partner in developing Twickenham River Centre, a community based environmental centre bringing the river to life for the people of Twickenham.
- 2 The Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames was founded in 1984 and has more than 280 members. The Trust has an established record in the renovation and management of buildings and landscapes, linked to environmental benefit and education. In recent years, the environmental and educational focus has grown, particularly with the establishment of Richmond Environment Network, an umbrella organisation hosted by the Environment Trust (with BTCV and Thames Landscape Strategy as partners) and providing support to more than 60 local environmental, community and amenity groups across the borough.
- 3 The Trust is the lead partner on the Twickenham River Centre. The Trust submitted the River Centre as its entry to the Twickenham Challenge competition in 2002. The Twickenham Challenge was set up by the previous Council administration to identify a public benefit component to the Twickenham Riverside re-development
- 4 The Trust was announced as the winner of the Twickenham Challenge in 2006 and put together a team to deliver the River Centre. Five key partners and some 35 associated organisations, ranging from locally based environmental and water based groups to regional and national bodies, are involved in the project
- 5 The Trust has been working on the detailed finances of the River Centre for the last 12 months with extensive assistance from business and commercial consultants, many of whom have given their time for free.

- 6 The River Centre Project Update, Sept 08, can be found at www.rivercentre.org.uk/rcsept08.pdf
- 7 The River Centre Summary Business Plan, Oct 08, can be found at www.rivercentre.org.uk/rcbpoct08.pdf
- 8 For more details contact the Environment Trust office on 020 8891 5455