

The **Environment Trust,** previously known as the Environment Trust for Richmond, is based in East Twickenham in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Its area of work now also extends into the neighbouring London boroughs of Kingston, Hounslow and Wandsworth. Despite pockets of considerable wealth, these boroughs also represent substantial inequality, and contain lots of neglected environmental gems. Suburban development forms a particular threat. Formed in 1984, the Environment Trust is unique in looking after both the natural and build environments, inspiring local residents to feel a sense of empowerment and engagement in relation to their local area. We protect and conserve buildings and landscapes of historic interest and character, by organising volunteering, improving skills, fostering inclusion and creating the stewards of the future. We are supported by a passionate board of Trustees, many of whom are local residents, and our patrons include the actress Helen Baxendale, wildlife broadcaster Gordon Buchanan, architect Sir Donald Insall, and artist Axel Scheffler.

The Trust is a relatively small charity, with a staff of eight and a turnover of approximately £300,000 per year. However we punch well above our weight in terms of ambition and reach. We are engaged in a broad range of activities reflecting our passion for the local environment and our belief that more can be done to help local people love and protect it, particularly its forgotten and neglected corners. These activities include:

* **Nature conservation -** London’s green spaces are highly valued by its residents and are essential for our well-being, but cannot be taken for granted. Councils no longer have adequate resources to ensure these spaces provide the best value in terms of recreation, habitat for wildlife, and resilience against the effects of climate change. Our conservation activities take place in local parks and other green spaces, where the Trust’s volunteers help to manage woodlands, meadows, ponds, rivers and streams, for the benefit of wildlife, and work to enhance the enjoyment people gain from getting close to nature in the city. We also work with schools in the three boroughs to give children the opportunity to play a part in improving their local green space for wildlife and to gain a better understanding of the biodiversity around them.
* **Conserving heritage buildings** -the Trust has a role in protecting the building fabric, and increasing access to, several vulnerable but significant local buildings of historical merit or community interest. At the moment these include two mausoleums, a large underground air raid shelter, a chapel and a burial ground. A partnership with Historic England is helping us to develop this programme. We also have several community heritage projects that help residents to research and learn about the heritage of the borough.
* **Horticulture,** including initiatives such as the Kitchen Garden in Marble Hill Park, and our recent ‘Jam Yesterday, Jam Tomorrow‘ project which uncovered the rich and varied Market Garden and Nurserylands history of Twickenham, Hampton and Hounslow in the 19th and 20th centuries.
* **Volunteering and engagement** – much of our work involves organising volunteering opportunities for local residents, running open days, supporting schools with environmental studies, offering volunteering to Duke of Edinburgh award students, running activities for corporate volunteering schemes.
* **An active events programme -** in order to raise money for core costs, events have recently included an annual Secret Art Sale, performances for children, celebrations of local produce, and participation in open days schemes.

Our blog (<https://www.environmenttrust.co.uk/blog>) describes some of these project in more detail and gives a sense of the day to day work of the charity. Our project funding comes from a range of sources including Thames Water, Santander, Tesco, Royal Borough of Kingston, the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity, and Kingston University, but we receive no core funding. Trustees are keen to broaden our funding base, and introduce more sustainability into some of key activities, to ensure the security of the charity for years to come.

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