

AINA CASE STUDY

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Fradley Pool: visitor facilities at a former canal reservoir



A popular nature reserve has been created close to a busy waterway junction

The former canal reservoir at Fradley Junction, where the Trent and Mersey Canal meets the Coventry Canal, has found a new lease of life as a nature reserve and angling pool. British Waterways carefully opened up access to the surrounding woodland to create an attractive trail around the pool which is now suitable for all visitors. Sections have been left unmanaged and marshy edges retained at one end of the water.

Waterside features include a series of angling platforms, a specially designed circular pond dipping deck, and a boardwalk across the marshy part of the pool. All have been constructed from black recycled plastic, which has the benefit of being long lasting and rot proof and has been treated with slip reducing surfaces. Seats and fencing have also been built using sustainable recycled plastic.

The main circular footpath around the pool was built from 100% recycled aggregates (a type one stone and dust) and was designed to meet access for all standards. Easy gradients are provided throughout. A key feature is the distinctive newly built bird hide, constructed from timber with a traditionally thatched roof.

Habitats are now managed to promote biodiversity and local schools were invited to participate in the design of features on site, including timber sculptures and seats carved with images of local wildlife. A nature detective pack is available, and British Waterways offers daily angling licences for the fishing platforms located around sections of open water.

The nearby pub, cafe and information centre at Fradley Junction act as gateways to the nature reserve, and the scheme successfully shows how attractive destinations can be created from disused aspects of the waterway network.