

River Brent at Tokyngton Park

Techniques: Re-meandering, backwater creation, de-culverting

Project location: Wembley, North West London

River: Brent

London Borough: Brent

Project end date: 2003

Length: Approx 2km

Cost: £1,400,000

Upstream grid reference: TQ201848

Partners: London Borough of Brent, Environment Agency

Site background

Extensive historical flood alleviation works undertaken in the 1940's and 1970's led to this section of river being straightened and encased in concrete. The river provided little or no recreational value, whilst the quality of wildlife habitat was poor. In 1999 a partnership was formed, with the aim of carrying out improvements to the park and provide a new lease of life for the river.

Objectives

- To remove the river from its concrete banks and create an attractive public open space.

Design

The partnership developed a masterplan for the whole park following a community consultation through a Planning for Real ® exercise. The river provided a focal point in this process with the aspiration to provide a better environment for wildlife and people. The concrete river banks were removed and the watercourse re-meandered. Some banks needed stabilisation which was achieved using live willow poles on the bank and re-cycled crushed concrete from the site at the toe; other less vulnerable banks were left to naturalise. Pool and riffle sequences were initiated within the design by varying the bed levels and introducing natural river gravels. A backwater was created and planted with reeds to provide an additional habitat feature and refuge in times of flood or pollution events.

Subsequent Performance - RRC's views

The project is a good demonstration of how river restoration can be an integral part of an urban regeneration programme. A far more attractive, diverse and accessible public open space has been created, linking previously divided communities. The channel is now more natural and is able to support a greater range of wildlife. Working with natural river processes, flood protection should also be improved.



Bank stabilisation with crushed concrete (hidden) and live willow poles providing good marginal habitat



New footbridge constructed across river



Creating a green space for people and wildlife



the River Restoration Centre Case Study Series

This site was last visited by RRC staff on 11th March 2008

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