1 Welcome to Reading Hydro

READING HYDRO

Look at the brightly painted building in front of you. It's the turbine house for a hydroelectric plant. The River Thames drops by about 1.4 metres here. On average 37 cubic metres of water flows down the river each second. We use some of this water to generate electricity.

Information board sponsored by the University of Reading

University of Reading

What does Reading Hydro do?

There's a lot of energy in moving water. People have made use of it for centuries. A water mill by View Island was mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086. But by the middle of the 20th century all the water mills in Reading had gone.

Fast forward to the 21st century. Local people saw the opportunity to use the water to turn turbines and generate electricity at this site. Hydroelectric power reduces use of fossil fuels and helps tackle the climate crisis. Reading Hydro was set up in 2016 and has turned that idea into reality.

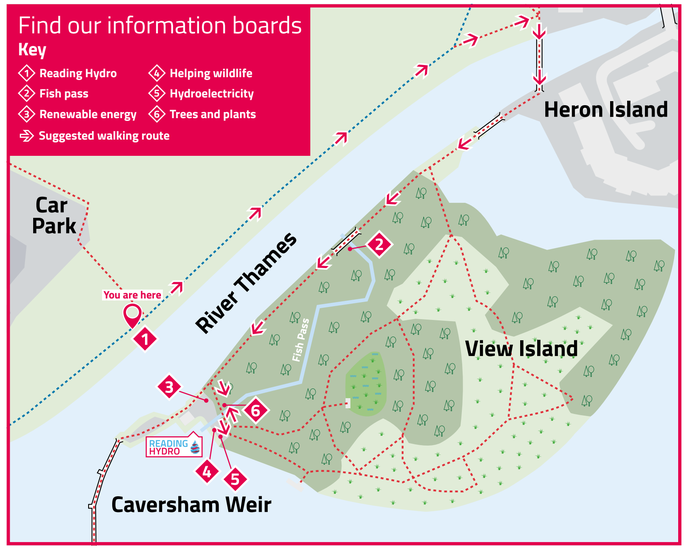
Our hydroelectric plant has two Archimedes screw turbines. They are in the river behind the turbine house. The generators and other electrical equipment are inside. We made a fish pass beside the turbines. This provides a way for fish and eels to travel up the river.

We expect to generate about 320 MWh (megawatt hours) of electricity every year. That's the amount that 90 average homes use. Thames Lido, across the river, buys most of this electricity from us.

For the community

Reading Hydro is a Community Benefit Society. This is a type of charitable company. It's run by volunteers. Anyone who supports our aims can become a member. Over 150 volunteers have helped to deliver the project, and are helping to run it. Volunteers built and painted the turbine house. Others built the fish pass.

750 members, mostly from the local community, invested in Reading Hydro to raise the £1.2 million to build the plant. It's a community-owned asset. We'll use the money from selling electricity to run and maintain the plant, and gradually repay investors. Any surplus will be used for a community fund to support local projects.



See for yourself!

Take a look at our map and follow the route to our numbered information boards. This takes you past the top of the fish pass to our turbine house, and then to the screw turbines. The route is wheelchair accessible up to Board 3.

Can you find Board 2 at the top of the Fish Pass?


The Fish Pass

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Generating renewable electricity from the power of water

Reading Hydro thanks the 150 volunteers and 750 investors who made this possible