

2 The fish pass

From here you can see part of the fish pass. It was built by Reading Hydro volunteers to help fish and eels move up the River Thames.

What is it for?

The fish pass helps fish and eels swim upstream, and not get stopped by the weir and turbines. Some fish passes have steps, but this one uses a long gentle slope. It has a 'technical section' (in front of you now) and a 'natural section'.

The slope of the fish pass varies so that water flows at different speeds (from about 0.5 to 1 metre per second) to cater for fish that like both slow and faster moving water. The flow is fastest (up to 2 metres per second) at the entrance.

The technical section

The technical section of the fish pass has a concrete base and sides. We bolted recycled plastic reeds to the base to slow the water flow. This makes it easier for fish to swim up the pass.

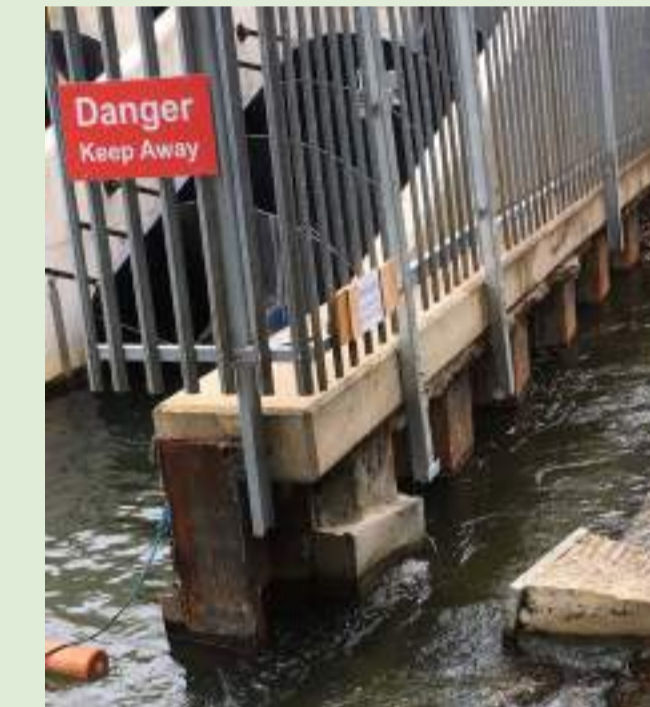


Brushes

There are pools in this section so that fish have somewhere to rest on their journey. It's hard work swimming uphill!

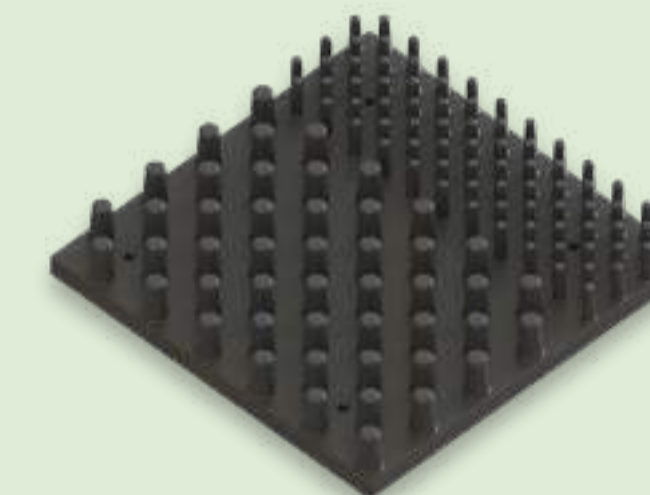
The natural section

The section of the fish pass near the turbines is like a natural stream. It was made from an old flood channel. The sides of the channel are natural, and we put gravel and sandy material on the base.



Narrow entrance

The entrance where the fish swim into the fish pass is narrow. This makes the water flow faster from the fish pass than from the turbine channel. The faster flow attracts fish, which might otherwise get confused and swim into the channel. We also put a special ridged 'eel tile' on the base of the fish pass entrance beside the turbines. These help eels to wriggle their way up into the pass against the flow of the water.



Eel tiles

How fast is the water moving at the entrance to the fish pass?

What have we done to help eels swim up the fish pass?

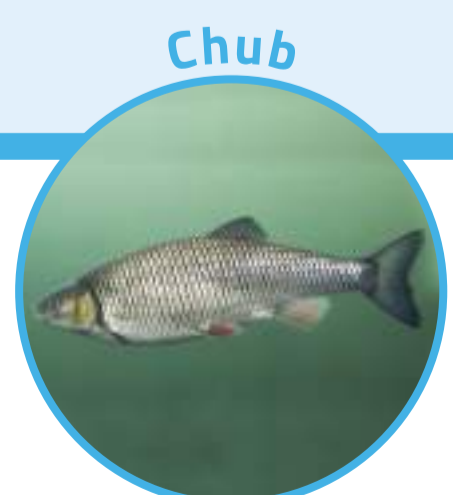


Eel

Types of fish

Chub and pike are the most common fish found near the weir. We hope to attract barbel, lamprey and eels to the fish pass as well. Look at Board 4 to find out more about the eels and fish that might use the fish pass.

Eels are critically endangered – why do you think their numbers might have declined?



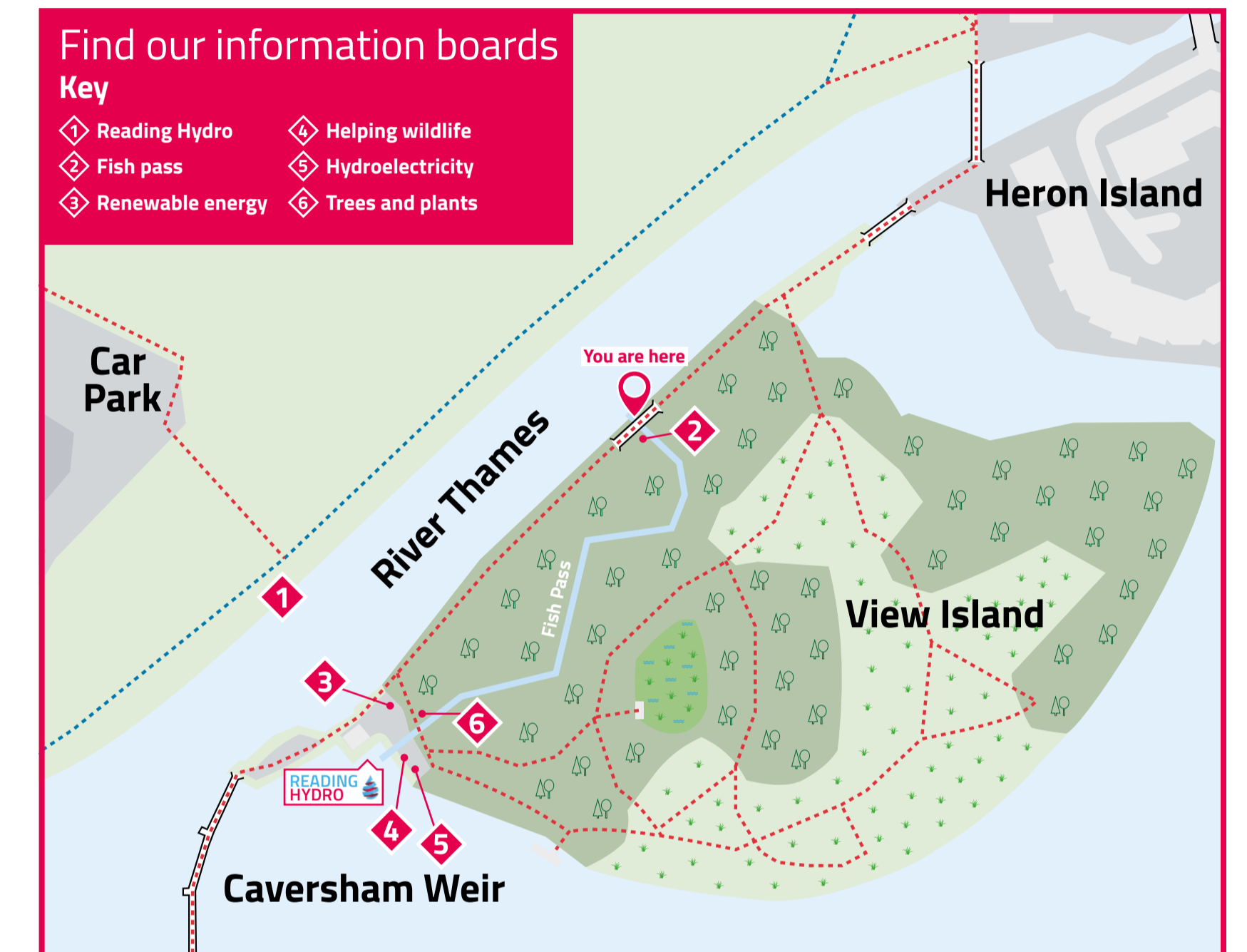
Chub



Pike



Common Barbel



Construction of the fish pass by volunteers



facebook.com/rdghydro @rdghydro @rdghydro
www.readinghydro.org

Generating renewable electricity from the power of water

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