

Hampstead Heath Ponds Project

Scheme address: Hampstead Heath, NW5

Landscape Architect: Atkins

Client/Landowner: City of London Corporation

Scheme description: The Ponds Project is an engineering and landscaping scheme that strengthened the existing dams on Hampstead Heath to meet reservoir safety standards and prevent dam collapse in the event of a large storm. After public consultation, a landscape-led design was conceived which involved building grass spillways and raising some of the pond dams with minimal use of concrete.

The area around the Model Boating Pond has been re-landscaped resulting in a natural looking pond and environmental enhancements have improved biodiversity and habitat creation for birds, insects, amphibians and fish. Sediment was removed from five ponds to benefit water quality. The scheme, although controversial, has been well received and was delivered on time and within budget.

The judges' view:

The judges were impressed by how well the hugely complex and technically challenging engineering functions of the project are concealed within the landscape. They felt that the project deserves recognition for taking the opportunity to enhance the landscape and put it on a more sustainable footing whilst also enriching the user experience of the Heath and improving accessibility.

