



## case study

## equal opportunities



Objective One is part-financed by the European Union



The Objective One Partnership for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

### PORTH RESERVOIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

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#### the project

This project has improved and enhanced the facilities and environment around Porth Reservoir creating improved opportunities for fishing and other nature activities.

The Programme has invested £31,152 from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the project which has a total cost of £127,612.



*Examples of some of the improvements at Porth Reservoir: resurfaced footpaths and new picnic tables with accessible sections for wheelchair users*

#### measures of equal opportunities adopted

The project was financed by monies from Heritage Lottery Fund, Objective One through the European Regional Development Fund, Restormel Borough Council, Cornwall County Council, County Environmental Trust and Porth Anglers to carry out its Porth Environmental Enhancements Project which will enhance and improve the existing facilities and environment around the water in order to provide new access for all.

#### benefits of equal opportunities

This is a project which has been able to make a major contribution to the equal opportunities objectives through the implementation of very simple and relatively low cost measures.

- The work has involved re-surfacing footpaths and where necessary adjusting gradients to enable use by wheelchair users. Disabled access fishing platforms have been created near the car park and a hide has recently been constructed suitable for use by wheelchair users. A tap rail has been included on the nature trail. Picnic tables with accessible sections for wheelchairs enable families to enjoy all the facilities. Fully accessible toilet facilities have been included in the visitor centre.
- The project has supported the employment of a modern apprentice who achieved an NVQ level 3 in land management and has gone on to become a self employed landscaper. He remains involved with this project through the organisation and running of fishing festivals.
- Further measures to enhance the accessibility of the reservoir include the development of an accessibility accredited website including a downloadable guide. People can download the information to personal MP3 players for use at the reservoir. The guide talks the user through from the entrance down to the lake and round the walks. It informs the blind or partially sighted user where the breaks in the tap rail are. Sounds have been included to create a sense of place and to reflect the local environment - church bells heard in the valley from St Columb Church, aircraft noise, civilian and military, from the airport as well as the expected birdsong and other nature sounds. Interpretation boards have been designed with the help of the Royal National Institute for the Blind.
- The visitor centre will encourage local schools to use the site as part of the national curriculum.
- Nigel Curnow, Porth Project Officer, has already tapped into local education at primary level and



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through Duchy College. He is hoping to develop a children's nature trail quiz. He said: *"If you can keep an eight year old interested and busy the whole family is happy."*

- Concessionary permits are available to young people, elderly people and those in receipt of state benefits.

SW Lakes Trust is an equal opportunities employer and all staff, both permanent and volunteers, receive equal opportunities training through the induction process. Nigel Curnow, Porth Project Officer said that it is important that volunteers have an induction process. *"They are from the local community and this is their local project. Induction helps them to own it."*

### lessons learnt

Public access around the area has been improved with the consolidation of existing footpaths or the creation of new. New opportunities for fishing and other nature activities accessible to all have been developed.

The economic benefits of the improvements at Porth Reservoir are dispersed - it is known that local B&Bs and small hotels in the area are benefiting from the national fishing festivals through the website which includes links to local tourist attractions, accommodation providers, campsites etc.

Local fishermen are also now spending in the area - there is no closed season and the water can be booked for competitions all year round; day permits can be bought from a self-service unit on site. This is a site open to all where match fishermen, families and people of all abilities are equally at home.

**For more information about how you can incorporate equal opportunities into your project please contact the Objective One Partnership Office on 01872 241379 or email [objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:objectiveone@cornwall.gov.uk).**



One of the new bird hides at Porth Reservoir