

Project: Boardwalk for Ellis Meadows Environmental Project  
 Client: Leicester City Council / Environment Agency  
 Specialist Contractor: Environments for People  
 Main Contractor: Jacksons Civils  
 Location: Leicester  
 Product: Duraplas® recycled plastics profiles



**A new wildlife park created on the banks of the River Soar on the outskirts of Leicester as part of a major scheme to improve flood defences in the city is equipped with a boardwalk made from recycled plastic.**

Ellis Meadows Park has been created by the Environment Agency with Leicester City Council to provide an important flood defence for hundreds of nearby homes. At the same time the new woodland, wildflower meadow and wetland habitat will help attract wildlife into the city. The boardwalk provides pedestrian and cycle access across the meadow.

The project proved an ideal application for a boardwalk built from Duraplas profiles from Centriforce. Manufactured from recycled plastic, Duraplas profiles can be used in exactly the same way as traditional timber, but can withstand being submerged in water without rotting and are unaffected by drying out in summer.

The plastic boardwalk was designed and installed by specialist contractor 'Environments for People' during August 2016. The walkway is 155 metres in total length and has three access points for traffic entering from different areas of the park.

Designed to meet DDA regulations and guidance, the walkway is two metres wide in the main sections, but also has two passing bays, the first 6m by 4m and the other 8m by 4m. The walkway sits between 0.4m and 1m above the ground, just above the main flood water level. It also crosses three low level ponds which have been created as wildlife habitats.

A riverside walkway/cycleway, which starts in the city centre and winds its way out to the city outskirts, links to Ellis Meadows. The park, which is equipped with picnic benches and BBQ areas, is expected to prove popular with local people.

Commented Hugh Roberts from 'Environments for People': "Recycled plastic boardwalks are absolutely ideal in these conditions. Capable of being completely submerged in winter and yet also able to withstand summer drought conditions, they can be expected to look good and perform for many years to come with little or no maintenance.

"The design was assessed by a structural engineer who was able to give the end-client confidence that the boardwalk would cope with both the anticipated traffic and the ground conditions."

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