



## Northala Fields

Northolt, Ealing, West London

**N**orthala Fields is constructed from recycled waste material that has given West London an innovative new park. Four conical eye-catching mounds have been constructed and set amongst new ecological habitats providing a unique, natural setting for varied recreational activities. More uniquely it has proved to be cost neutral for the council tax payers of Ealing, in that it is a self funded park. The gate fees for the imported material have covered the cost of the entire project.

The story of Northala Fields, part of Northolt and Greenford Countryside Park, began eight years ago, when a new park was proposed followed by a public consultation with the local residents. A design competition was launched, which was won by Form Associates whose director, Peter Fink, developed the original concept. He had a visionary aim: to create art from land, made

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from recycled waste. Not only are the mounds a landmark but they also act as an effective barrier between the noise, air and visual pollution from the A40 for park visitors and nearby residents. Planning permission was granted by Ealing Council in June 2004 and construction began in August 2004. The site was previously the Kensington and Chelsea Playing Fields and had fallen into decline so the new park would have the added advantage of bringing this land back into use.

The park is a showcase example of sustainable development as it used waste from other construction projects to create a viable new environment. The largest of the four mounds has a spiral path, made from gabion retaining walls and from its highest point, at 25m, there are fabulous views far across London. For motorists travelling on the A40, one of the main routes into the capital, the mounds of Northala Fields have become a striking feature.

Sustainable construction methods have been used extensively for many features of the park. Over the past four years inert landfill waste from nearby London sites, such as Wembley Stadium and White City, has been transferred to the site and used to create the conical shapes, integral to the park's design. This method meant that the project was primarily funded by collecting waste deposits and, in so doing, it reduced the consumption of new materials that had to be brought in.

### Recycled materials

- Plastics used to create new fishing stations and pathway edging

- Timber for the bins and seating
- Concrete in the retaining gabion walls, bins and seating
- Bricks and crushed aggregate in the pathway networks

Northala Fields now serves a large catchment area in West London, the local neighbourhoods of Northolt and Greenford are all enjoying using the new facilities, these include: an amphitheatre, hand carved seating, boating and fishing lakes, play areas and pedestrian walkways. Ecologically, many diverse habitats have been created: water and wetland, wet meadows, grassland and woodland. All of the 'soil' to support the varied wildflower habitats was made on site by blending site excavated subsoils and crushed imported materials in different proportions to create unique and varied substrates for seeding both top and subsoils.

Northala Fields is a huge success and its exemplary, economic design proves waste material can be recycled creatively and economically for the benefit of all.

### Details

Site form: heavy bank from quarry  
 Location: Northolt  
 Landscape architect: landscape design  
 LIA Design  
 Landscape architect partners: Peter Fink, Yoram  
 Associates and: HOWE  
 Client and overall project management:  
 Ealing Council  
 Area of Project: 114.5 ha  
 Open to public since: 2004  
 Project Date: 05/04  
 Funding sources: Self-funded by recycled  
 waste  
[www.lia-design.co.uk](http://www.lia-design.co.uk) or  
[www.ealing.gov.uk/services/leisure/parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/new\\_developments/northala/](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/services/leisure/parks_and_open_spaces/new_developments/northala/)

