



The history of Grafham Water

Grafham Water was constructed in the 1960's to meet the demand from the new town of Milton Keynes and the rapid expansion of Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire's existing towns. It was originally a joint project between Mid-Northants Water Board, Great Ouse Water Authority and Bedfordshire County Council but transferred to Anglian Water in 1974.

Originally called Diddington Reservoir after the little brook whose valley it flooded, it was renamed Grafham Reservoir and subsequently Grafham Water. The reservoir is on a plateau with nearly all of its water being abstracted from the River Great Ouse at Offord and pumped up to form the 1500 acre (600 hectare) lake.

HRH Prince Philip opened the reservoir's water treatment works and the Grafham Sailing Club in 1966.

In addition to the sailing club a trout fishery and education centre were included in the original design and Sir Peter Scott opened the nature reserve at the western end.

Most of the leisure infrastructure you see today was provided in the last 19 years including a visitor centre, cycle hire and route, fishing lodge and restaurant. The water treatment works has been expanded and modernised to meet increasing demand and today's higher quality standards.