



## The history of Rutland Water

The reservoir is only 32 years old but looks as though it has always been here!

Rutland Water was built in the 1970's to supply water to the growing populations and industry in the East Midlands utilising water from the lower reaches of the rivers Nene and Welland. It was one of 64 sites that were investigated at a time when other options such as barrage across the Wash were rejected.

Planning and consultation took ten years ending with the 'Empingham Reservoir Act 1979. Construction of pumping stations, tunnels, pipelines, dam and the treatment works started in 1972 and took five years, the reservoir was filled over three years between 1975 and 1978.

In 1976 the project's name was changed from Empingham Reservoir to Rutland Water in response to local views

If you visit Rutland Water you will find relics dating back to 200 million years ago when the River Gwash valley was submerged below the Jurassic sea and fossils from that time and later dinosaurs such as Ichthyosaurus which swam through the waves can be seen in the museum. There is evidence that the valley was home to people from the middle Stone Age through to the Bronze and Iron Ages, followed by Romans and later the Anglo-Saxons and finds from these periods were discovered when the reservoir was constructed. Some artefacts are on display in the Normanton Church museum while others are in Oakham and Leicester museums.

Normanton Church Museum was originally a Mediaeval Church to St Matthew which was partly rebuilt in the 18th century and the church tower was rebuilt in the 19th century to resemble St Johns in Smith Square, Westminster.

The church was saved from the reservoir by raising the floor by 3metres, waterproofing the walls and building the stone embankment in the early 1970's with funds raised largely by the Normanton Tower Trust.

In 1986 it was re-opened as a museum by Anglian Water and attracts 30,000 visitors each year to see the history of the reservoir.

Today water is pumped from the two source rivers to fill the reservoir whenever it is available above minimum flows which are set to protect the environment of the rivers. Up to 270 million litres per day are continuously pumped from the reservoir, treated to a very high standard and then pumped again through the thousands of Km of pipes which distribute it to 500,000 people in 5 counties.