

RECREATION SITES

EA-MIDLANDS-Box 5

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ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY



RECREATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

INTRODUCTION

The Environment Agency was formed by the Government in 1995. It comprises three former organisations concerned with the environment - the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution and the Waste Regulation departments of local authorities. It is the most powerful environmental protection body in Europe and is concerned with Pollution Prevention and Control, Water Quality, Water Resources and Flood Defence. Other functions of the Agency essential to integrated environmental management include Fisheries, Conservation, Recreation and Navigation.

Our vision is.....
 'a better environment in England and Wales for present and future generations'

THE MIDLANDS REGION

The Midlands Region of the Agency covers an area of 21,000 sq km containing over 10,000 km of rivers, streams and canals and serves a population of over 8 million people. The Region also contains many of Britain's major manufacturing industries. Industry and agriculture are major users of water resources and can create potentially polluting waste as a result of their activities. Waste water from millions of homes also has to be treated and eventually flows into rivers and streams.

To minimise pollution, the Agency plays a key role in the regulation of major industrial processes and consent is required for discharges to water, air and land. Similarly, we consent or license sewage works discharges to rivers and the operation of waste tips. We protect our limited water resources by licensing river and ground water abstraction. We also use these procedures to screen new proposals to minimise any impacts on wildlife and recreation.

Over half our funds are used to protect houses and property from flooding and this work can often create the opportunity for habitat improvements for wildlife, enhancement of the landscape and recreation facilities for people.

RECREATION

In creating the Agency, the Government recognised the importance that recreation plays in society. Recreation is a key factor in the health of the nation and makes a major contribution to the quality of life for many people. The Environment Act reflects this concern and contains duties which protect and promote water-related recreation. Principally these are:-

- * To protect existing uses and create opportunities for recreation in the course of the Agency's work.
- * To make the best use of the Agency's sites for recreation and to develop and demonstrate best site management practices.
- * To promote the use of water and associated land for recreation.

When carrying out Flood Defence works, opportunities may arise to improve recreation facilities. For example, improvements in flood protection can create the right circumstances to improve river access or provide footpaths and cycleways. We place special emphasis on incorporating facilities for disabled people in schemes we design and construct in an effort to create greater choice for all recreation users.

Not only do we ensure an integrated approach within the Agency, we also work to improve recreational facilities and promote opportunities in partnership with other organisations including the Countryside Commission, Sports Council and local authorities. Working with others offers many advantages. Combining resources, enthusiasm and expertise creates real environmental improvements which are valued by the community.

An example of a collaborative recreation project is the 'Severn Way' undertaken in partnership with local authorities along the route. Started in 1995, the project aims to develop a 220km footpath alongside the River Severn from its source in the Welsh mountains to the sea in the Bristol Channel. By establishing links with the riverside communities, the project will bring benefits for walkers and the local economy. A key feature is the formation of management plans which encompass the principles of sustainable development especially by integrating transport links by road, rail, river and footpath. It is hoped to complete this major long-distance footpath by 1998/99.

We own and manage over 30 recreation sites across the region which we open for members of the public to enjoy activities such as walking, fishing, picnicking, bird watching, cycling and boating. The map in this leaflet illustrates the location and nature of the activities on Agency recreation sites across the Region.

We provide information which helps people use

rivers, lakes and canals for recreation. This information includes up-to-the-minute details of river levels and long-term tidal bore predictions. We produce a range of printed materials including fishing and canoeing guides as well as a periodical for anglers. Details of our information service is given below.

We create the opportunity for everyone to have a say on environmental and recreation improvements in and around their community through our strategic planning framework called 'LEAPS' (Local Environment Agency Plans).

The Agency is a statutory consultee in the planning process. This means we can comment on development proposals where they affect rivers and other watercourses. This can often highlight the need for protection or enhancement of recreation provision as part of any development.

We collect information regarding levels of use and trends in water recreation so that we and others can help meet the needs of users. We also undertake research into the impacts of water recreation on the environment so that we can better balance the needs of people and wildlife.

FISHERIES

Angling is the largest participatory recreation activity in the Region and is licensed by the Agency. Government grant and rod licence duties fund many activities which help anglers including fisheries protection, restocking, rehabilitation, regulation, research and enforcement. A separate leaflet which further explains this work of Agency entitled the 'Role of Fisheries' is available from the Midlands regional office at the address given below.

NAVIGATION

The Midlands Region is famous for its canal and river navigation network. Indeed Birmingham has more canals than Venice and the Rivers Severn and Trent have traditionally carried boats for centuries. Most navigations are managed for boat traffic by a navigation authority. However, the Environment Agency in the Midlands is not a navigation authority. For most canals and river navigations such as parts of the Trent, Severn and Soar the navigation authority is British Waterways. The exception is the River Avon where boats are regulated by the Upper and Lower Avon Navigation Trusts. All craft using river and canal navigations must have a licence and these are issued by the appropriate navigation authority. On the River Idle and the middle reaches of the Severn there is deemed to be a public right of navigation although there is no navigation authority. For further information :-

British Waterways can be contacted on	01827 252000
The Upper Avon Navigation Trust can be contacted on	01386 870526
The Lower Avon Navigation Trust can be contacted on	01386 552517
Details of boat hire companies can be obtained from the Association of Pleasure Craft Operators on	01952 813572

On most other rivers, streams, lakes and ponds where there is no evidence of a public or statutory right of navigation, permission to operate boats or canoes must be obtained from the riparian land owner. In such circumstances, the British Canoe Union sometimes negotiate access rights with riparian owners on behalf of its members.

Recreation information available from the Midlands Region of the Agency

'Riveline' (River level telephone message service)

Middle and Lower Trent	-	0891 122611
Avon and Lower Severn	-	0891 122622
Middle and Upper Severn	-	0891 122633

Canoeing - A Canoeists Guide to the River Severn 'Have fun - Have a Care' - canoeist code.

Agency Recreation sites - See this leaflet overleaf.

Fishing - Guides are available as follows:
 Regional Fishing Guide - 400 venues.
 Trent Fishing Guide and Soar/Wreake Fishing Guide.
 'Fisheries News' - a periodical news magazine for anglers.

Walking - The Hafren Forest Trails and Source of the Severn Walk.

Severn & Trent Tidal Bores - The Severn Bore and Trent Aegir.

River Users - River Avon Users Guide.

Boating - A Beginners Guide to Boating on Inland Waterways.





MIDLANDS REGION ADDRESSES

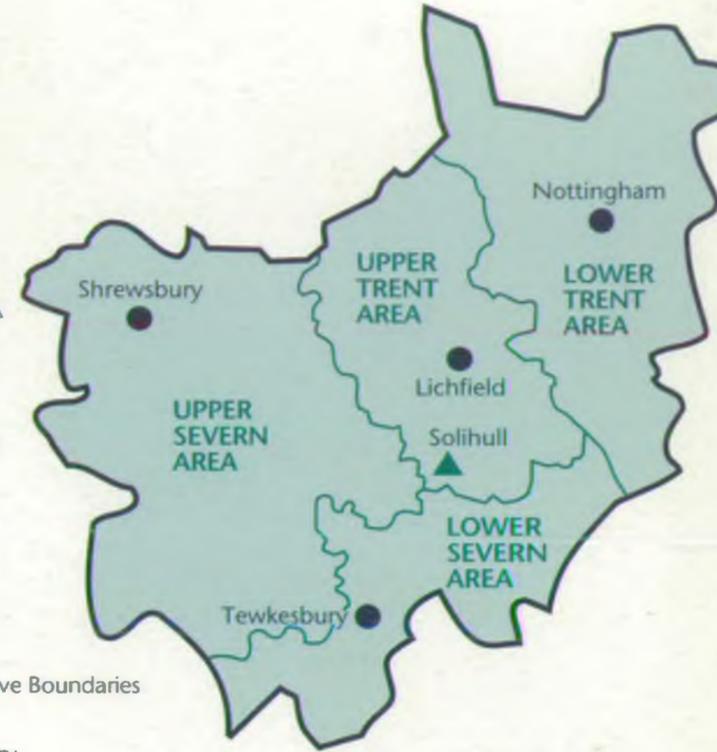
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550 Streetsbrook Road
Solihull
West Midlands B91 1QT
Tel: 0121 711 2324
Fax: 0121 711 5824

UPPER SEVERN AREA
Environment Agency
Hafren House
Welshpool Road
Shelton
Shrewsbury SY3 8BB
Tel: 01743 272 828
Fax: 01743 272 138

LOWER SEVERN AREA
Environment Agency
Riversmeet House
Newtown Industrial Estate
Northway Lane
Tewkesbury GL20 8JG
Tel: 01684 850 951
Fax: 01684 293 599

UPPER TRENT AREA
Environment Agency
Sentinel House
Wellington Crescent
Fradley Park
Lichfield WS13 8RR
Tel: 01543 444 141
Fax: 01543 444 161

LOWER TRENT AREA
Environment Agency
Trentside Offices
Scarrington Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham NG2 5FA
Tel: 0115 945 5722
Fax: 0115 981 7743



- Area Administrative Boundaries
- Regional Boundary
- Area Office
- ▲ Regional Headquarters

RECREATION SITES



For general enquiries please call your local Environment Agency office. If you are unsure who to contact, or which is your local office, please call our general enquiry line.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
GENERAL ENQUIRY LINE
0645 333 111**

The 24-hour emergency hotline number for reporting all environmental incidents relating to air, land and water.

**ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
EMERGENCY HOTLINE
0800 80 70 60**

