



Discover Walton pumping station



The very first foundation stone of Walton pumping station was laid by Charles Hearson, Chairman of the Works and Stores Committee of the Metropolitan Water Board, on 24 October 1908.

The station began operating three years later when John Burns MP, President of the Local Government Board, started its engines on 10 June 1911.

Walton has helped supply water to homes and businesses in Surrey and West London ever since.

In the 1900s:



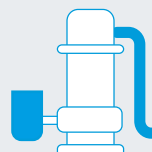
£119,310
was spent
to build the station



£49,653
was spent to install the
engines, pumps and turbines

Up to
30 million gallons
of water could be pumped into
reservoirs each day

10 tonnes
of coal were used by each
steam engine each day



Walton through the ages

Designed by James Restler, Deputy Chief Engineer of the Metropolitan Water Board, Walton's red brick structure with hipped slate roofs and raised lantern lights looks distinctly Edwardian.

Since its construction, the station has had lots of extensions and alterations. Neville Chamberlain, Minister of Health, unveiled the first extension in July 1926. More filter beds were opened in 1950 on the west side of the station.

Construction on Walton South reservoir began in 1957. The main building was then refurbished in the early 1960s.

Thames Water Authority eventually took ownership of Walton in 1974 before our privatisation in 1989.

World-class water storage

Covering an area of 317 acres, with a perimeter of around 2/34 miles and a depth of 571/2 feet, Walton South reservoir is nearly the same size as Hyde Park! It stores 4,300 million gallons of water from the River Thames that we can use when demand is high or supplies are low, especially during the warmer summer months.



Above: Walton Reservoir building site, 1953

The pumps in their prime

Walton's four triple-expansion steam engines pumped millions of litres of water into the reservoirs at Molesey and Walton for 50 years.

After the steam engines were decommissioned in the 1960s, electricity was used to power the pumps instead. Only one of the original steam engines is still in the station, and this was used for the last time in August 1975.

When construction started, Walton South was the deepest reservoir ever built by the Metropolitan Water Board. Led by chief engineer Henry Cronin, the project cost around £3,050,300 in total (plus £173,000 for the land).

Even with the use of innovative building techniques, which needed far fewer labourers than other projects at the time, the reservoir still took five long years to complete – and that was three months ahead of schedule! Queen Elizabeth II finally unveiled it to the public on 30 March 1962.

Below: Walton engines



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