

# Christchurch Park

## The Reg Driver Visitor Centre

The Reg Driver Visitor Centre was completed in December 2007 as part of the restoration of Christchurch Park funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Ipswich Borough Council. The Centre was named after James 'Reg' Driver, who was the first Chairman of the Friends of Christchurch Park, President of the Ipswich Branch of the Royal British Legion and an Ipswich Borough Councillor (1976 - 1990). It was officially opened on 7 May 2008.

As well as housing the park manager's office, the Centre also has an education room, a reception area, and public toilets. In the education room and reception area there are displays of information about the Park, its history, restoration, trees, plants and wildlife. As the education room is available for hire, access to the displays may be limited when the room is being used for a private meeting.

The Centre was built to a high specification. Ipswich Borough Council wanted as many modern energy efficient technologies as possible to be incorporated into its design.

### **The Building**

- has a high level of insulation. The windows in the education room face south and allow light and heat in, trapping the heat inside;
- heating is provided by hot water under the floor. The heating in each room is controlled individually;
- all lighting is energy efficient;
- lighting and ventilation are controlled by sensors and automatically turn off.

### **Sun-catchers**

Lighting in the back half of the building is provided initially by sun-catchers - these are domes that sit on the outside of the building and channel natural daylight into the building. The super-reflective tube intensifies the sunlight and the refracted base sends the light to fill the

space below. The catchers are backed up by low energy bulbs for dull days and evenings.

### **Solar panels**

The electricity used to power the ceiling fans in the toilets is provided by photovoltaic cells on the roof of the building. The energy is stored in a small battery and the fan starts when sensors detect a person entering the room.

### **Woodchip boiler**

A woodchip boiler provides the heating and hot water in the building. It is fully automated, getting chip from an adjacent store. The process is carbon neutral - i.e. the carbon dioxide produced by the burning procedure is equivalent to the carbon dioxide locked into the wood during the trees' growth. We source our woodchip from a sustainably managed woodland.

### **Rainwater harvesting**

All the rain that falls on the roof of the Reg Driver Visitor Centre is collected and stored underground (harvested). When you flush one of the Centre's toilets rainwater is pumped to the toilet from the underground system. This means that we do not need to use freshwater from the mains. You may notice that the water in the toilet is a slightly different colour, but by using rainwater we are both saving money and not wasting mains water.

### **Green roof**

We have two kinds of 'green' roof:

- the first is a sedum roof. Sedum is a plant that can retain a lot of water even in the hot sun. This is a shallow roof.
- we also have a deeper roof that is planted with shrubs.

Green roofs are a good way to insulate a building and stop any heat from escaping. They are also good for the environment as they help to clean the air.