

Although this part of the Black Country is largely urban and industrial in nature, this area now boasts the longest nature reserve in Europe. This route winds its way along the final stretch of the Wyrley and Essington, through Wolverhampton, finally joining the Birmingham Main Line.

Key Info

Start: Wyrley and Essington Canal,
Bentley Bridge Retail Park
WV11 1BP

Finish: Dudley Canal Trust,
Birmingham New Road DY1 4SB



Scan or visit
bit.ly/bentley-bridge-trail
to find the map in
Mapometer and download
the GPX file

Distance: 7 miles
Time: 2-4 hours (approx)
Locks/Portages: 0
OS Map: Explorer 220 Birmingham

- 1 Start at Bentley Bridge Retail Park. After an easy launch, head left following the canal South West. Arrive at Horseley Fields Junction in around 1.25 miles. Here the Wyrley & Essington Canal meets the Birmingham Mainline.
- 2 At the junction, pass the old boat dock and turn left onto the Birmingham Old Main Line and begin the journey south east towards Birmingham city centre and away from Wolverhampton.
- 3 At around 1.6 miles is Chillington Wharf, a former rail to canal transfer with an overhead crane, now Grade 2 listed.
- 4 4.2 miles in you will reach Deepfields Junction. The canal to the left is Bradley Canal, which originally linked to the Walsall Canal but now terminates at the Canal and River Trust Regional Workshops. Here lock gates and boats are crafted in the workshops. Keep to the right fork.
- 5 Past Deepfields Junction, a short way on is Coseley Tunnel; 325m long, two boats wide and with a double towpath. Paddlers must adhere to guidelines on usage of tunnels by unpowered craft.
- 6 On leaving the tunnel, continue to Factory Junction at just under six miles. At the junction, head right, away from the locks, past Malthouse Stables Activity Centre (R).
- 7 A quarter of a mile further brings you past a small memorial garden for William Perry aka the Tipton Slasher. Look out for the Fountain Inn on the opposite side of the canal.
- 8 Continue along the canal a short way until the next junction. Head straight ahead (right hand fork) to the Dudley Tunnel Branch, under bridges and into the Dudley Canal Trust.

Find more
paddling trails at:
gopaddling.info



This Canoe Trail takes a course through some of the the canal network's most important industrial heritage. The Main Line canal from Birmingham was originally planned to bring coal for the city's industry from the Wednesday coalfields but it was soon realized that a link down from the Birmingham plateau was need to get finished goods around the Country.

By 1772 this entire canal was completed to Wolverhampton and down 20 locks to Aldersley Junction, linking Birmingham with the River Severn and many opportunities for trade.

The opening of the nearby Dudley Tunnel opened up another important route down to Stourbridge and its glass industry. It was later modernised with the arrow straight Netherton Tunnel 3027 yds long. Due to their length, both tunnels are closed to unpowered craft. The Netherton is however opened to canoeists on certain arranged dates in the year.

William Perry, aka the Tipton Slasher, was a champion boxer in the 1850's. Born to canal narrowboat parents, he was also the landlord of many local pubs; one of which being the Fountain Inn. Quite the local celebrity, his remains now lie at the foot of the memorial you pass.

Access/egress/parking and possible bunkhouse accomodation can be arranged with Malthouse Stables.

Tel: 0121 520 7861



Tunnels:

In tunnels, you must use a forward facing bright light (such as a head torch).

Safety and Licenses

We want you to enjoy a safe trip, so here are a few tips for staying safe and paddling responsibly.

Paddle Safe:

Be prepared and take the right kit:

- Wear a correctly sized buoyancy aid
- Mobile phone – in a waterproof case
- Whistle – to attract attention in case of emergency
- Map and / or route description
- Appropriate clothing for the weather conditions + spares in a dry bag
- Food, drink & sunscreen!

Paddle Responsibly:

Respect the natural environment and other users:

- Respect other waterway users #sharethespace
- Be environmentally aware, minimise your impact
- Ensure you have the correct licence if required
- Observe navigational rules – keep right and give other users space
- Check, Clean, Dry after every trip!

Licences: The waterways in this trail are managed by the Canal and Rivers Trust and require paddlers to hold a license. British Canoeing membership includes a full annual license for this waterway - please take your membership card with you as this acts as your license. Non-members can either purchase a British Canoeing membership from www.britishcanoeing.org.uk or buy licenses direct from www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

Visit our website
britishcanoeing.org.uk
for more information

