

This trail leaves the busy centre of Birmingham, taking a quiet, winding route out of the city on the Worcester and Stratford Canal. The route provides a pleasant full day paddle, through residential and leafy suburbs of the big city, with bags of industrial heritage.

Key Info



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

Start: Cambrian Wharf, Birmingham B1 2AN
Finish: Shirley Drawbridge, Drawbridge Road, Shirley B90 1DD
Distance: 10 miles
Time: 3-5 hours
Locks/Portages: 0
OS Map: Explorer 220 Birmingham



- 1** From Cambrian Wharf, head away from the locks and toward 'Farmers Bridge Junction'; the island in the centre of the canal outside the Sea Life Centre/ Arena. This was installed during the War to enable the canal to be closed off and flooding prevented if it was bombed.
- 2** Turn left, onto the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, through Brindley Place and Broad Street Tunnel, into Gas Street basin. You are going through the narrow Worcester Bar. As you turn right at the Mail Box corner the BBC studios are on your left.
- 3** Follow the canal under 'Lovers Bridge', noting the many padlocks on the bridge railings. This is a very quiet corridor out of the city, passing initially through 'Edgbaston Tunnel' and then 'The Vale' Tunnel. Emergency access/egress and parking is available just after the Vale tunnel on the left.
- 4** At around 2.5 miles the trail passes the hospital (right) and University (left) and shortly after, passes over the Ariel Aqueduct, built in 2011. Soon after pass Selly Oak Junction, where the Lapal Canal is currently under restoration.
- 5** Pass over Bourneville Aqueduct, with Cadbury's World on your right, at about 4.5 miles. Landing/parking available, at around 5 miles, just prior to Pershore Road Bridge (no facilities).
- 6** Reaching Kings Norton Junction, at 5.75 miles, turn left onto the Stratford Canal.
- 7** Pass through Kings Norton Gullotine lock in 300m and at 6.6 miles pass through Brandwood Tunnel (300m). Lyons Boat Yard can be reached, on your right, at just under 8 miles, with access, egress, shop & facilities.
- 8** After this your route becomes more rural, finishing, at just over 10 miles, at Shirley Drawbridge. The bridge is too low to paddle under (unless open).

Find more
paddling trails at:
gopaddling.info

Paddling through the bustling cafes and bars in Brindley place is a unique experience. It's a fantastic way to view the world; floating gently through Gas Street tunnel, under Broad Street and over 'Worcester Bar'. Here the Birmingham Canal Company refused to connect to the Worcester Canal, so the two navigations were separated. This meant goods had to be lifted from one canal to the next. Worcester Bar was later replaced with a 'stop lock' which is now left open to allow passage between the two canals.

As the route passes out of the city, the canal heads straight through Cadbury's Bourneville works – world renowned for its chocolate! Bourneville itself was a model village created by the Cadbury family wishing to provide better living conditions for the workers. There were extensive wharfs where the chocolate 'crumb' was unloaded from the docks. Nowadays Cadbury's has a busy visitor centre and is a popular attraction for tourists.

Shortly after joining the Stratford canal, the well known and unusual Kings Norton Guillotine Stop Lock is now restored (and left open). This is the only lock of its kind on the canals.

Near here you can see remains of Lifford Lane Bridge, where pioneers saved the canal by forcing a low railway bridge to be raised. At the end of the route, Shirley Drawbridge is an interesting feature, cutting across the canal; lifting to stop road traffic and allow boats to pass through.

Parking

Start: Nearest parking is at Brindley Place or on street. Toilets at Brindley Place or on site, accessed by CRT key.

Finish: No on-street parking. Please ask at the pub to use their car park.



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 & suncream!

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 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

