

River Thames

Pangbourne to Reading (Thames Valley Park)

Easy to Moderate Trail

Route Summary

This is a short trip on a part of the Thames, near to the urban sprawl of Reading, but winding amongst pretty countryside. It leaves the small village of Pangbourne and ends at the Wokingham Waterside Centre. There are two locks, and both can be used by paddlers, therefore making it easier for canoeists with ambulatory problems. This is a busy part of the waterway, so on a fine summer's day, you will encounter both large numbers of boats on the river, and many people at picnic sites.

Nearest Town - Pangbourne and Caversham, Reading

O.S. Sheets - No. 175, Reading and Windsor

Start - The Adventure Dolphin Canoe Club, Pangbourne, near Reading, Berkshire
Postcode: RG8 7DA

Pay and Display car park

The start is reached by turning north in Pangbourne village towards the river, crossed by Whitchurch Toll bridge. Turn right just before the bridge, into the car park, with pedestrian access on to a large green space by the river, with easy launching. This is at the side of a large grassed riverside area, just downstream of the Whitchurch toll bridge over the river.

Public toilets are in Pangbourne village which has all other facilities

Pangbourne is a small village in the banks of the Thames. It also has a railway station so it is possible to get to the river so with planning a car shuffle may not be needed. Reading back to Pangbourne, the railway station is about a quarter mile from the river at Pangbourne

Finish – Wokingham Waterside Centre, Thames Valley Park Drive, Reading,
Postcode: RG6 1PQ

The centre is at the Reading end of the A329M.

Huge field for picnics, and parking on the road (height restriction at the Centre car park). Public toilets.

All other facilities in Reading itself.

Waterways Travelled – River Thames

Type of Water - River and navigation

Distance – 8 miles

We have taken great care to ensure the currency, accuracy and reliability of this information. We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention, the information will be amended accordingly. Users should be aware that environmental conditions outside of our control can change the nature of the Trail within a short space of time. It is recommended that weather and water conditions are checked beforehand, and tide timetables where applicable.



Licence Information – A licence to paddle the Thames is included in the Canoe England membership fee. (Take your Canoe England membership card with you as it is your licence as well)

Local Facilities – There are shops at the start in Pangbourne

Vehicle Shuttle Required - Yes.

Portages and Locks – 2 locks

Description

You can launch directly from the parking area next to the river. Once on the river paddle downstream (ie away from Whitchurch Toll Bridge) towards Mapledurham Lock. If you look left after about a mile you may well see fields full of Lamas and Alpacas.

Mapledurham Estate is now visible on the left bank up the hill, with green open spaces, and the main house on the estate.

The Old Watermill at Mapledurham is the only mill on the Thames that is still operational. A mill on this site has been producing high quality stone ground flour since the time of the Domesday Survey

At the lock (canoe portage on the left) during the summer months a cup of tea and a slice of cake can be purchased alongside the lock keeper's cottage.

Once you put back in there is an ideal picnic spot on the corner with a little beach where lots of fun can be had playing in the water here. Do look out of the wildlife around here. There are freshwater mussels and eels too!! Too early for lunch? well continue to paddle on downstream and you will find it hard to believe that the rural countryside is actually so close to Reading!

After about three miles from the lock you will come across some very large houses on the bank and on the other side (the site of Reading Festival <http://www.readingfestival.com/home/>) is a lovely green park area which has plenty of space to picnic etc. There are public toilets near to the car park at the Rowing Club. There is also a café at the back of the Rowing club.

On the other bank is Reading Canoe Club

Travel under Caversham Bridge and on to Caversham Lock.

Caversham Lock is portaged right for canoes and there is a choice of two "put ins". One immediately down some steps back in to the water just below the lock gates. Use the one furthest away if the lock is being emptied it is another 75 metres further on around the bend but is a super entry point.

Once back on the river paddle on and you will pass a huge Tesco's and then the mouth of the Kennet and Avon Canal (this is the way to Reading town centre if you should want to go there

We have taken great care to ensure the currency, accuracy and reliability of this information. We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention, the information will be amended accordingly. Users should be aware that environmental conditions outside of our control can change the nature of the Trail within a short space of time. It is recommended that weather and water conditions are checked beforehand, and tide timetables where applicable.

© BCU copyright 2013

This material may be freely reproduced except for sale or advertising purposes provided it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as BCU copyright and the title of the publication specified.

...its about a mile upstream) a few hundred yards further on you reach Wokingham Waterside Centre and this is your final destination.

Portage right and again there is a huge field for picnics etc. There are public toilets behind the centre. There is a height restriction on the car park but one can easily park on the road so it's not a problem.

Useful Information

River Thames Conditions <http://riverconditions.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

www.pangbourne-on-thames.com/

<http://www.mapledurham.co.uk/index.php>

<http://www.wokinghamwatersidecentre.com/>

<http://www.reading-canoe.org.uk/>

Recommended Next Trail

If you have enjoyed this trail why not try out one of the many trails available.

Safety Information

Spending an afternoon canoeing can be a fun way to experience nature, get a great work out and spend time with friends and family. It can also be a dangerous journey, if appropriate safety guidelines are overlooked. Always follow these basic rules.

Wear appropriate clothing

Always wear shoes. Rocks, rough terrain and river beds present serious hazards to boaters without the proper attire. Nearly 90per cent of all boating injuries are attributed to lack of proper footwear. Other canoe safe clothing includes hats, additional dry clothing towels, and layered items which can easily be removed.

Be sure to

- Know the weather forecast before you set out canoeing.
- Familiarise yourself with the local area, it's sensitive places and protected areas.
- Leave the environment as you found it. Please read [You, Your Canoe and the environment](#)
- Take your litter home with you.
- Follow the navigation rules for the waterway you are on.
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not damage bank side vegetation when launching or landing. (No Seal Launching)
- Where possible keep to any designated paths or launching points.

We have taken great care to ensure the currency, accuracy and reliability of this information. We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention, the information will be amended accordingly. Users should be aware that environmental conditions outside of our control can change the nature of the Trail within a short space of time. It is recommended that weather and water conditions are checked beforehand, and tide timetables where applicable.

- Canoe a safe distance away from wildlife.
 - Check your equipment.
 - Observe the navigation rules for this waterway.
 - Check to see if there are any events on the waterways when you wish to travel.
- Use the checklist below to make sure you have everything you need.

Checklist:

1. Boat
2. Paddle
3. Buoyancy Aid
4. Bailer/sponge
5. Small First Aid Kit
6. Penknife
7. Mobile telephone (in a waterproof bag....Please note that in some areas due to the location mobile telephone reception might be nonexistent)
8. Fresh drinking water
9. Sun cream, hat and sunglasses
10. Light waterproof jacket
11. Footwear
12. Licence

ALWAYS be certain to let other know where you're going and when you're expected to return.

Specific Environmental Information:

Please ensure you don't remove or damage any plants or animals from the waterway as they may be protected or harmful if transferred to other catchments.

Canoeists and kayakers take very seriously environmental concerns and already follow existing voluntary environmental codes of conduct, including Canoe England's own guidance notes outlined in the "You your canoe and the environment" publication.

By following the simple steps below you can ensure your presence is not detrimental to the freshwater environment, minimize and avoid accidentally disturbing wildlife and their habitats.

- Find out about the area before you go, noting its sensitive places, species and breeding seasons.
- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home with you.
- When clearing litter left by others, handle it with care.
- Leave the environment as you find it
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not "seal" launch or drag boats to avoid wearing away natural banks. Float your canoe for launching, lift out when landing and carry it to and from the water.
- Do not damage bank side vegetation when launching or landing.
- Where possible keep to any designated paths or launching points.
- On rivers, avoid paddling over gravel banks in low water conditions – they may contain fish spawn.

We have taken great care to ensure the currency, accuracy and reliability of this information. We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention, the information will be amended accordingly. Users should be aware that environmental conditions outside of our control can change the nature of the Trail within a short space of time. It is recommended that weather and water conditions are checked beforehand, and tide timetables where applicable.



- Constantly assess wildlife. If you see signs of disturbance move away quietly.

Be the eyes and ears on the water. Report pollution, wildlife problems, damage, incidents etc to the relevant authorities.

Canal & River Trust - Emergencies- Telephone 0800 47 999 47

RSPCA for wildlife and animals in distress – Telephone 0990 55 59 99 (24 hours)

Environment Agency - Telephone 0800 80 70 60 (24 hours)

(Aug 2013)

We have taken great care to ensure the currency, accuracy and reliability of this information. We cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention, the information will be amended accordingly. Users should be aware that environmental conditions outside of our control can change the nature of the Trail within a short space of time. It is recommended that weather and water conditions are checked beforehand, and tide timetables where applicable.

© BCU copyright 2013

This material may be freely reproduced except for sale or advertising purposes provided it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as BCU copyright and the title of the publication specified.