

River Wey Navigation Guildford to Pyrford Moderate Trail

Route Summary

The Wey was one of the first British rivers to be made navigable and opened to barge traffic in 1653 and it is quite unusual. The Wey has two separate sources in two different counties. The two River Weys unite near the historic Tilford Oak in Surrey

The Wey and its two Navigations flow across 87 miles (140 km) of countryside yet drop a mere 98 feet (30 m) by the time the waterway joins the Thames at Weybridge.

This 15½-mile waterway linked Guildford to Weybridge on the Thames, and then to London. The Godalming Navigation, opened in 1764, enabled barges to work a further four miles upriver. The award-winning visitor centre at Dapdune Wharf in Guildford tells the story of the Navigations and the people who lived and worked on them. Visitors can see where the huge Wey barges were built and climb aboard Reliance, one of three surviving barges.

Nearest Town - Guildford

O.S. Sheets - Landranger No. 176 – West London, and No. 186 – Aldershot and Guildford

Start - Riverside Road, Bellfields, Guildford, just off the A320 by Stoke Bridge MR186/997512 Park in the Riverside Road but do check to see that there are no events on at the Waterside Centre (home of Wey Kayak Club) as the roads can be very full. Park down by the river to the left of the Row Barge Public House. Do not launch or land from the fenced public house grounds and use the small triangular area of land nearest the road bridge

Otherwise walk down to Wey Kayak Club and put on and off there.

From the A3, take the slip road off, and either left into Stoke Road, or right, and under the bridge into Stoke Road. First left into Maple Grove, turn right at the river.

Finish – The Anchor pub, next to the lock – MR187/054593, Pyrford, Surrey

From Guildford, take the A3 towards London. Just before the junction with the M25 take the slip road signed for Wisely Royal Horticultural Society and turn into Wisely Lane. Continue on this minor road that leads to Pyrford Lock and cross over the bridge (tight width restriction) for the limited on road parking opposite the Anchor pub.

The Anchor pub car park is for customers only and barrier controlled.

Waterways Travelled – River Wey Navigation

Type of Water - River, with locks and backwaters

Distance – 8 miles – will take 4 – 6 hours

Licence Information – A licence to paddle the River Wey is included in the Canoe England membership fee. Otherwise licenses can be obtained from The National Trust, Dapdune Wharf, Wharf Road, Guildford Surrey GU1 4RR, tel 01483 561389

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Local Facilities – In Guildford, and in local villages

Vehicle Shuttle Required - Yes

Portages and Locks – 7 locks (2 are flood gates and normally open)

Description

The start is downstream, to the left from the Waterside Centre, under the A320 to arrive at Stoke Lock. Portage right and cross over the towpath to launch into the backwater from the pontoon, returning to the canal by passing under the metal footbridge

One mile further on is a tight bend. Take a sharp right to avoid the weir dead ahead, two bridges follow, and then sluice gates under the towpath on the right side. This is Bowers Lock, with a portage on the right side.

Below the lock, the backwater re-joins the canal, and also water from the sluice gates on the right. The A3 road is alongside on the right, and can be noisy.

Turn sharp left after passing under Broadoak Bridge to avoid the weir straight ahead. Sutton Place is to the left, a former home of Henry 8th and more recently the Getty family. Send Church Bridge and Wareham's Bridge are just above the next lock, Trigg's. Portage on the right, and there is a weir chute to the left.

Below here, the river re-joins on the right, the weir chute from the left. It is only 0.8 of a mile to Worsfield Gates, and on the right, an overflow joins, and you should keep right, as the next weir is on the left. The Gates are normally left open, but if not, portage on the right.

Paddle under Ashburton footbridge, and then there are sluice gates on the left. The A247 passes over on Cart Bridge, a large brick bridge next to the New Inn. River turns right, passing under two footbridges, High Bridge and Tanyward Footbridge. The next lock is only 1.6 miles down, and on arriving at Papercourt Lock, portage on the right. There is a large three level weir on the left, near to the lock gates, so take care getting back on the river.

After this, go under a footbridge, the river re-joins the canal on the left, followed by a backwater on the left. On the right, a small weir chute, go left to paddle under the B367 single-track Newark road bridge. (There is a car park here (height restrictor) for arranging a shorter 6 mile paddle) Keep left and after only 0.7 miles, portage left at Newark Lock. Cross over the towpath footbridge and launch immediately below the lock. The river re-joins the canal on the left, followed by a millstream on the right near the ruined remains of Newark Priory. Downstream, there is another large weir immediately to the right of Walsham Gates. Keep left to enter or portage what is the last of the original turf-sided locks. It is only a mile before reaching the last lock, at the Anchor pub, Pyrford Lock with two footbridges in between.

At Pyrford Lock land on the right bank, where there is plenty of room to sort out boats and equipment before transferring to vehicles parked nearby over the bridge.

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Useful Information

Maps and Guide Books

The National Trust has a map and guide to the Navigations, and a book of circular walks from the river. These are available at Thames and Stoke Locks, Dapdune Wharf, Pyrford Basin, Guildford Boat House, Farncombe Boat House and Guildford Tourist Information Centre.

Nicholson Guide to the Waterways No. 7 with Ordnance Survey mapping. Published by Harper Collins.

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 and comply with navigation rules- keep to the right of on-coming boats. There are a number of sharp bends on this canal to require keeping a sharp look out at these points

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.
 - 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.

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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 others 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.
- 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.

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The National Trust, Dapdune Wharf, Wharf Road, Guildford Surrey GU1 4RR, tel 01483
561389
RSPCA for wildlife and animals in distress – Telephone 0990 55 59 99 (24 hours)
Environment Agency - Telephone 0800 80 70 60 (24 hours)

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