

River Wey Navigation Pyrford Lock to Weybridge Town Lock Moderate Trail

Route Summary

Enjoy a paddle along the Wey which was one of the first British rivers to be made navigable and opened to barge traffic in 1653. It is quite unusual waterway. 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.

Nearest Town - Weybridge

O.S. Sheets - Landranger No 187 – Dorking, Reigate & Crawley and No. 176 – West London

Start

Limited off road parking on the opposite side of the canal to the Anchor pub – Map 187 Ref 054593

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

On the A3 travelling towards London, between Ripley and the junction with the M25 take the slip road signed for Wisely Royal Horticultural Society. Turn into Wisely Lane and continue on this minor road that leads to Pyrford Lock. Cross over the canal bridge (tight width restriction) for the limited off road parking immediately on the left- TQ 054593

or from the A245 at West Byfleet take the minor roads to Pyrford Green, thence to Pyrford Lock by reference to the OS maps.

Finish

Weybridge Town Lock Map 176 Reference 069647
Public car adjacent (free with height restriction)

Turn off the A317 between Weybridge and Addlestone into the Bourne & Weybridge Business Park. Take the first exit at the mini roundabout that leads to the canal and Weybridge Town Lock. Opposite the lock turn into Weystone Road for the car park.

If travelling from Pyrford Lock the most direct route is via the A3, M25 and (J11) for Chertsey, then A317 for Weybridge.

Waterways Travelled – River Wey Navigation

Type of Water - Rural and urban river

Distance – 4.8 miles (3-4 hours)

Canoe Trail Grading - Moderate

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License 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

(Take your Canoe England membership card with you as it is your licence as well)

Local Facilities - In Weybridge

Vehicle Shuttle Required – Yes

Portages and Locks - 2

Description

This is both an urban experience, but also more rural at times. Launch by the off road parking area. Pyrford Basin is close by on the left, with mooring capacity for 170 boats. After this is Dodd's footbridge, and then Murray's Bridge. You paddle under the main A245 road bridge, West Byfleet to your left, and then the Old Parvis Bridge and Byfleet Boat House, (some parking here), the former main road. The canal then has a long straight section, with the roar of the M25 on your right.

Next is the brick-built Woodham Railway Bridge, the Woodham Footbridge, and then the entrance to the Basingstoke Canal on the left. Go under a metal-covered bridge, and the M25 bridge. Between here and the lock at New Haw there are numerous moored boats at the foot of gardens backing onto the canal.

Portage right at New Haw Lock opposite the small spillway(weir). This entails crossing the A318 that is usually busy and care is required. Just below the lock and on the left the spillway rejoins the canal that can be taken for the White Hart pub with a waterside garden and easy landing.

It is only 0.8 miles to Coxes Lock mostly passing houses that overlook the canal until as far as Addlestone Canoe Club when the canal assumes a brief rural aspect. Two bends in the course of the canal later brings Coxes Lock into view with a portage on the right. The impressive former mill on the left is now flats, When launching be aware the spill from the mill pond discharging into the pool area can create a back eddy by the lock entrance.

There follows a railway bridge, the Pelican pub, Blackboys Bridge, and the finish at Weybridge Town Lock. Land on the towpath 50 yards before the lock. To keep the towpath clear, boats and kit can be moved across the road, and over the footbridge to a useful area of open ground at the rear of the car park.

Weybridge town centre with full facilities is a five minute walk beyond the lock and over the road bridge.

The trail is also suitable for a longer out and back paddle from Weybridge to Pyrford.

Useful Information

The river has been recorded in history as the Wegan (956–1225) and Waie (1190–1193).

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During the seventeenth century the river was made navigable to Guildford and extended in the eighteenth century to Godalming. The Basingstoke Canal and Wey and Arun Junction Canal were later connected to the river. The navigable sections are now owned by the National Trust.

The river has long been used as a source of power for mills, and many are recorded in the Domesday Book. At one point there were 22 mills on the river, and more on its tributaries. At various times they have been used for grinding grains, fulling wool, rolling oats, crushing cattle cake, leather dressing, paper production and gunpowder manufacture. Willey Mill was still in use in 1953 (Cox's Mill closed in the 1980's and saw the end of commercial traffic on the waterway). There were more watermills per mile along the River Wey than anywhere else in Britain.

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.

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 workout and spend time with family and friends.. However, it can also be a dangerous journey, if safety guidelines are overlooked. Always follow these basic rules and comply with navigation rules- keep to the right of on-coming boats. Please be careful at points along the trail where there are sharp bends on the waterway and keep a look out at these points for oncoming traffic.

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.

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- 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 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.

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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)

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