

River Coquet Moderate to Challenging Trail

Route Summary

Starting at Amble Harbour with Warkworth Castle in sight, a chance to picnic on route and enjoy the wonderful scenery this trail has to offer.

O.S. Sheets- Landranger 81/Explorer 332

Start and Finish

Coquet Street
Amble
NE65 0DR

NU 246062



The Braid car park just upstream of the Marina at NU 261049. This is a paddle upstream with the tide, and return on the ebb.

Alternatively you could park at Warkworth: Go past the Castle, down the hill and bear left through the car park to the riverside parking area, just upstream of the church. There is a canoe access ramp here. This car park can be very busy on summer weekends.
NU 246062

Waterways Travelled - River Coquet

Type of Water - Rural river and part coastal

Distance - 5 miles

Licence Information - A licence is not required

Local Facilities

At the start/finish point there are cafes, public toilets etc

Portages and Locks

There is a very small weir just upstream of the Warkworth access point, and it is shallow below here if the tide has not risen high enough. It is easy to pull the boats over it on the town side, and it can be shot through a gap on the other side when coming downstream.

If the half-tide weir is not covered, it can be portaged on the south bank (slippy with seaweed). Coming downstream it can



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.

be shot with care unless the tide is too low.

Description

From the Braid, the river takes you upstream for about a mile with Warkworth Castle firmly in your sights. When you reach the small village, the river loops right round it, really demonstrating the strategic position of the castle, once a stronghold of the Percys of Northumberland, including Shakespeare's Harry Hotspur. You pass under two bridges, the beautiful old bridge with its tollgate, and the modern replacement.

The canoe access ramp is soon after the ancient church with its strange spire, and it is worth a stop to go and visit the village (pubs/patisserie/cafes/ etc).

Carry on upstream over the small weir (usually covered at high tide), past the rowing boats and through a wooded section. On your right there are some steps leading to the Hermitage, carved out of the sandstone rock. It is an English Heritage property, and can be visited when the warden is present.

A little further upstream is a high weir which takes off supplies for the water treatment works, and the limit of our trip. You may find people fishing just below the weir; please respect their sport and turn before you reach them.

Although for minimal effort, it is best to time your arrival at the top weir, this trip can be done at most states of the tide. If you start at Warkworth and only go downstream as far as the half-tide weir, then you can avoid the muddy/windy section of the estuary.



Amble Harbour

Paddling downstream of the Braid requires a little more caution. It is best to keep to the north side of the river; away from moored boats. There is often quite a lot of movement of boats in and out, but they mainly keep to the south side, where the deeper channel is. There are extensive mudflats to the north of the harbour (covered at high tide), which are home to numerous birds. Please take care not to disturb them. This is favourite place for many species of bird; particularly in early summer you can see eider duck, shelduck, herons, swans, terns, cormorants, etc.

Unless you are an experienced seakayaker, do not venture out of the harbour. The tide runs fast through the entrance, and there are off lying rocks and shallows giving rise to confused seas.

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.

Useful Information

River Levels

From here down to the half-tide weir (about 800m upstream of Amble), the river is wider and more exposed to wind, but can be paddled at all states of the tide. There is little current, unless the river levels are higher than normal.

Below the weir, the current can be stronger, particularly on the ebb, and there is little shelter in strong winds. As the tide drops below half-tide, the exposed banks become increasingly muddy.

Downstream of the Amble Access point the harbour can be busy with boats, and there are yacht moorings to contend with. There can be strong currents, particularly on a falling tide. Canoeists are recommended to keep well to the north side of the harbour. Conditions in the harbour entrance can be rough and the current strong and it should be avoided by the inexperienced.

If you are starting or finishing at Amble, it is best to time your trip during the period of HW +/- 3 hours.

Times of HW Amble can be found on several [webpages](#)

Upstream of Warkworth, the river, although still tidal, has relatively little flow, and is very sheltered. The weir can be dangerous in high river levels. The upper river is very sheltered, but the estuary is exposed to strong winds.

Public WC at the tourist information centre in Amble (NU266046) (Not at Braid car park);
Public WC in Warkworth.

Nearby Visitor Attractions

The whole of the Northumberland Coast north of Amble is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Castles such as Dunstanburgh and Bamburgh, small harbours like Alnmouth, Craster, Beadnell, Newton and Seahouses are all worth a visit.

Alnwick is a traditional stone-built town, where the main attractions are the Castle (often used as a film set) and the Gardens. The Bailiffgate Museum is interesting, and it has a thriving Playhouse.

Inland is the pleasant town of Rothbury, nestling below the [‘sacred mountain’ of Simonside](#), with the Cheviot Hills beyond.



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.

And, getting down to basics, there is always Morwick ice-cream parlour – it's made on the premises with milk from their herd of prize cows. (Just upstream of Warkworth).

[Coquet Island](#) is home to thousands of breeding birds including puffins and terns (including the rare Roseate Tern)

More information from:

[Amble and the coast](#)

[Alnwick](#)

[Alnmouth](#)

[Rothbury](#)

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.
 - 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.

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.

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.

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.



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)

(May 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.