

River Medina Isle of Wight Moderate Trail Grading

Route Summary

This is very much a mixture of an urban and rural trip. If wanting to see plenty of multi-million pound yachts, this is the place for you, as even without the regattas in the summer, Cowes is always a busy place, but also has an old-world charm, and is a pleasant little town.

Tidal river; Tides +0029 Dover, Folly Inn +0015. If paddling to land at the Folly Inn, set off from Cowes an hour before high tide

Nearest Town - Cowes

O.S. Sheets - Landranger No. 196 – The Solent and Isle of Wight

Start - Whitegates, Arctic Road, Cowes PO31 7PQ –SZ 499951

Finish – Same, or at the Folly Inn, East Cowes PO32 6NB – SZ 508929

Waterways Travelled – River Medina

Type of Water - Tidal estuary

Distance – 5 miles

Licence Information – None required - tidal

Local Facilities – Locally, in Cowes

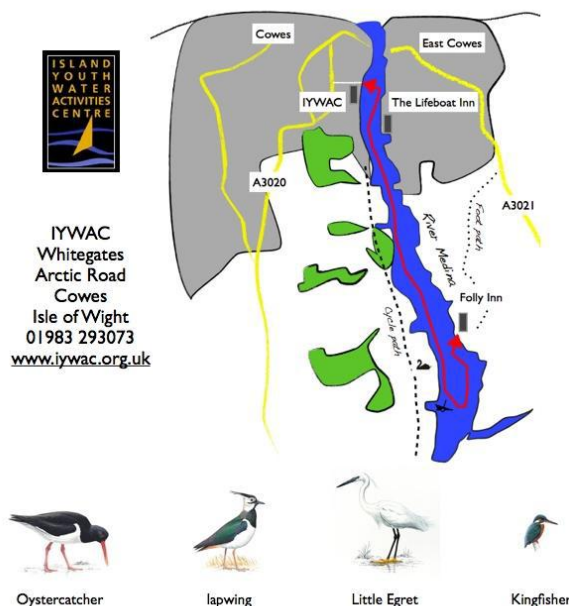
Vehicle Shuttle Required - No, unless if only going to Folly Inn – route back is via the A3021 to East Cowes town, and back over the ferry. No vehicle shuttle required if doing an out and back trip

Portages and Locks - None

Description

The start is at the Whitegates pontoon at the IYWAC in Arctic Road, Cowes, on the west side of the Medina River, amongst both old and new boatyards, and many moored yachts on both moorings and pontoons. Don't bother turning north to the mouth of the river, as it becomes even more congested, and there are also the busy ferries to run you down.

The first mile or so remains busy, with many 'trots' of moorings, and boatyards, but a much quieter scene awaits those with the patience to paddle upriver. The east side of the river is



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especially crowded up here, and then the boats give way to oil tanks on both sides, and then greenery.

The east bank has open fields, the west bank one of the interesting little inlets into which you can poke a canoe or kayak, followed by a wooded stretch. The bird life is always abundant, with lapwings in the fields at the right season, little egrets feeding in shallow water, oystercatchers busy and noisy in the Spring, and kingfishers on the quieter parts of the river.

After the boat activity quietens down, there is another near mile before the Folly Inn on the east bank, a welcome stop, with its own steps and pontoon.

The paddler can go as far up the river as he or she likes, with an old shipwreck to paddle around, the east side widening out, with more shallows and inlets. The Island Harbour Marina is set into a large inlet on the east bank, and if going further, the Medina Valley centre on the west bank has a landing-stage. Then simply turn around and enjoy your paddle back with the outgoing tide.

Useful Information

There can be Fast tides and mud at low tide. Paddling the route near to high tide will avoid fast flow.

Cowes has all of the facilities of a large town – plenty of restaurants, pubs etc. if starting from the IYWAC (Island Youth Water Activities Centre), there are toilets available.

By its nature the River Medina is extremely busy with commercial and leisure shipping all of which are bigger than you! Stay to the right of any channel and where possible stay out of the shipping channel completely. Be aware of other water users.

The Estuary, by definition, is tidal please ensure that you will have enough water to get back (or be prepared for a muddy wade). At times the tide moves with great speed so be aware of objects that you could become trapped against. Check the tide times and weather conditions before you set out.

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.

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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.

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.

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- 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.

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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