

Start by crossing one of the wonders of the waterway world – the Barton Swing Aqueduct. Wind your way through the suburbs of Salford and the leafy expanse of Broadoak Park to finally reach the pretty estate village of Worsley.

## Key Info

**Start:** Chapel Place, Redclyffe Road,  
Barton Upon Irwell M41 7LG

**Finish:** Plank Lane Swing Bridge,  
Plank Lane, Leigh WN7 4QE



Scan or visit  
[bit.ly/barton-upon-irwell](http://bit.ly/barton-upon-irwell)  
to find the map in  
Mapometer and download  
the GPX file

**Distance:** 10.5 miles

**Time:** 3-5.5 hours (approx)

**Locks/Portages:** 0

**OS Map:** Landranger 109 Manchester

- 1 Access the water from a path on the Trafford Park side of the Manchester Ship Canal. Put on and paddle over the Barton Swing Aqueduct.
- 2 The navigation now curves right through the suburbs of Salford and on to Worsley. Take a break here by mooring in the park opposite the Boat.
- 3 Worsley is under consideration to become a World Heritage Site. Before leaving paddle to the right of the Packet House and under an arch into the Worsley Delph. Here you will see the entrance to two tunnels which lead to 46 miles of underground canal networks.
- 4 Exit the basin, taking note of the white building, a 17th century nail making workshop, between the entrance and exit. Your route continues to the right, in front of the Packet House and under a road bridge.
- 5 Leave behind the industrial past and head through open farmland to Boothstown, where a new marina and a large modern pub have been constructed.
- 6 Your paddle finishes at the Plank Lane Swing Bridge, just beyond Pennington Flash, in an area which was part of Brickshaw Coal Mine. Note the strange orange colour of the water caused by iron ochre seeping from the old coal mines.



Find more  
paddling trails at:  
[gopaddling.info](http://gopaddling.info)



The Bridgewater Canal was constructed when Lord Ellesmere, the Duke of Bridgewater, wanted to transport his coal from his underground mines in Farnworth and Bolton some 10 miles away. The present structure of the Barton Swing Aqueduct was built in 1894 to replace the original stone arches (although one still remains).

Worsley is widely recognized as the place where the seeds of the canal age were sown. At Worsley, take your time to look at the boat house and Packet House.

The boat house was built by Lord Ellesmere to house the royal barge built for Queen Victoria's visit in 1851.

The Packet House, a half-timbered building, sits at the head of the canal where the navigation swings left. It was originally built in 1760. It is so named because it was where the packet boats left on their journey to Manchester. Before continuing paddle to the right of the Packet House and under an arch into the small shallow basin of Worsley Delph. Here you are the entrances to two tunnels which lead into 46 miles of an underground canal networks. The left one is completely blocked off but the right one still allows the water from the now defunct coal mines to drain freely into the canal.

Once clear of this, the canal heads west through open country through Boothstown. The areas mining heritage is never far away and as you approach Astley, the pit-head gear of the Colliery Museum is clearly visible. From here an industrial wasteland is entered but soon the mill chimneys of Leigh appear. At Leigh Bridge the Bridgewater becomes the Leeds & Liverpool Canal but our journey continues beyond Leigh towards Pennington Flash, now a sailing and water activity centre. You get out at Planks Lane Bridge just beyond the Flash.

Venture-Out, a Go Canoeing Tour Provider, have boat hire locally if you need more equipment:  
[www.venture-out.co.uk](http://www.venture-out.co.uk)

Further useful information can be found on the following websites:  
[www.agcm.org.uk](http://www.agcm.org.uk)  
<http://www.visitsalford.info/worsleytrail.htm>



## Safety and Licenses

*We want you to enjoy a safe trip, so here are a few tips for staying safe and paddling responsibly.*

### Paddle Safe:

Be prepared and take the right kit:

- Wear a correctly sized buoyancy aid
- Mobile phone – in a waterproof case
- Whistle – to attract attention in case of emergency
- Map and / or route description
- Appropriate clothing for the weather conditions + spares in a dry bag
- Food, drink & suncream!

### Paddle Responsibly:

Respect the natural environment and other users:

- Respect other waterway users #sharethespace
- Be environmentally aware, minimise your impact
- Ensure you have the correct licence if required
- Observe navigational rules – keep right and give other users space
- Check, Clean, Dry after every trip!

Licences: The waterways in this trail are managed by the Bridgewater Canal Company and require paddlers to hold a license. British Canoeing membership includes a full annual license for this waterway - please take your membership card with you as this acts as your license. Non-members can either purchase a British Canoeing membership from [www.britishcanoeing.org.uk](http://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk) or buy licenses direct from [www.bridgewatercanal.co.uk/boating/licensing](http://www.bridgewatercanal.co.uk/boating/licensing)

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