

Erewash Canal Trail Part 1 – Langley Mill to Ilkeston

Easy Trail Please be aware that the grading of this trail was set according to normal water levels and good environmental conditions. Environmental conditions can change the nature of the trail within a short space of time. Please check weather and water level/conditions before heading out.

This route has been developed in partnership with the [Canal & River Trust](#), and is Part 1 of a 2 part trail covering the complete Erewash Canal. There are also two shorter out-and-back routes removing the need for a shuttle vehicle.



Canal &
River Trust



Route Summary

The Erewash Canal tracks along the border of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, meandering through the countryside, and round the edges of the area's towns and villages. In some parts urban, some parts rural, the canal plots a course through the area's natural and cultural heritage. This trail covers the top section of the canal, heading from the village of Langley Mill through to Ilkeston as it passes through the Erewash Valley, a green retreat for the

Distance: 5 Miles

Approximate Time: 1-2 hours (although a whole day can easily be spent exploring the lake)

The time has been estimated based on you travelling 3 – 5mph (a leisurely pace using a recreational type of boat).

Waterways Travelled: Erewash Canal

Type of Water: Suburban canal

Portages and Locks: 7 locks

Nearest Towns: Langley Mill and Ilkeston

Start: Great Northern Basin, Langley Mill, NG16 4AA (SK 454 471)

Finish: Gallows Inn Fields, Nottingham Road, Ilkeston, DE7 5BB (SK 475 403)

O.S. Sheets: OL 260 Nottingham or LR 129 Nottingham & Loughborough

License Information: A license is required to paddle on this waterway. See full details in useful information below.

Local Facilities: Pubs, cafes and shops at the start and close to end of the route No public toilets

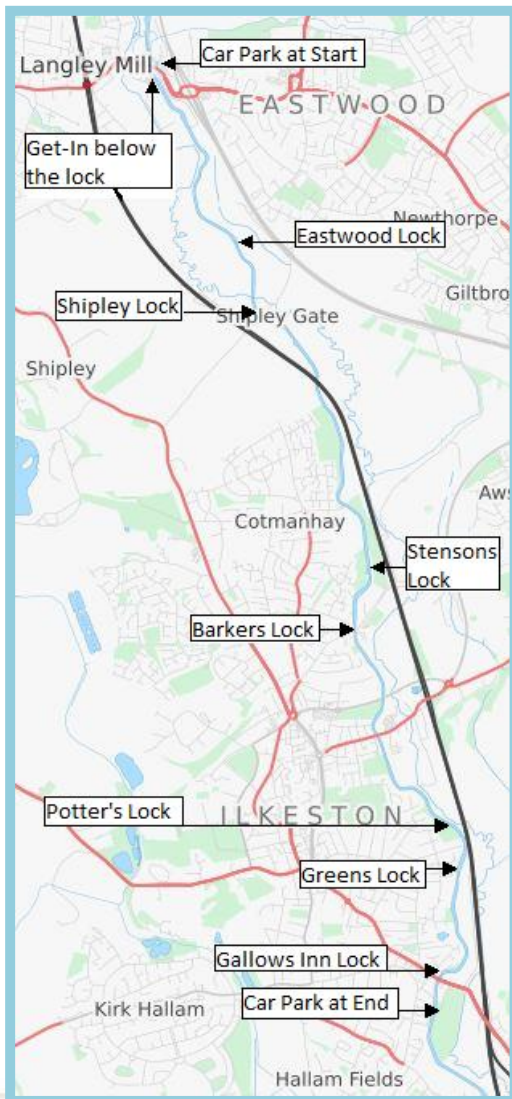
towns of the two counties. Popular with walkers, anglers and cyclists, the Erewash Canal also makes for an excellent paddle, combining countryside views with urban heritage.

Start Directions

On road parking is available on Linkmel Road (SK 455 471, NG16 3RZ), by the Great Northern Pub. From here access to the canal can be gained by walking a short distance on the main road past the pub – ignore the first entrance to the basin as this is a more difficult access point. Instead take the second entrance, descending the steps to the canal below the lock. Enter the water just past the road bridge (by KFC) to avoid any issues at the lock approach.

Finish Directions

Unless completing the trail as an out and back route a shuttle will be required to Gallow's Inn Playing Fields at Ilkeston (DE7 5BB, SK 475 403). There is a large, free public car park here.

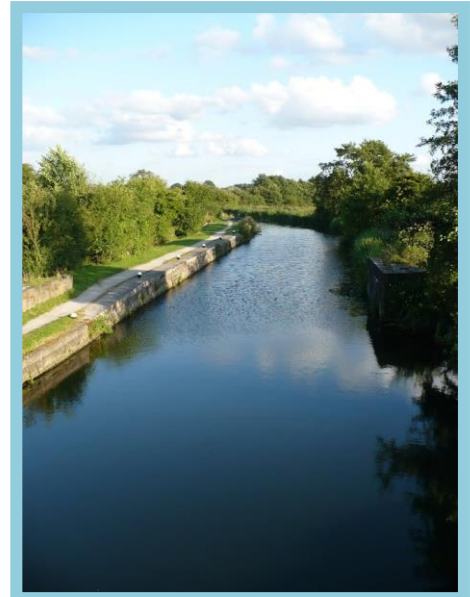


Description The trail below the Great Northern Basin at Langley Mill, with its moored boats, boat yard and a restored Victorian pump house. Although now the terminus of the Erewash Canal, the basin actually sits on what was once the start of the Cromford Canal. It was once however instead the place where three canals joined together, transporting coal, iron and other resources from Derbyshire, the Peak District and Nottinghamshire to the across the UK and beyond. The [Cromford Canal](#) ran from Cromford near Matlock, connecting with the High Peak Railway to Langley Mill – the present basin, lock and the few meters of canal where this trail begins – actually represent fragments of the old Cromford Canal. The [Nottingham Canal](#) branched off from here, initially tracking the [Erewash Canal](#) before heading off to the city of Nottingham to connect with the Trent and Northern England. The Erewash itself connected with the Derby and Sandiacre Canal to enable goods to be transport to Derby and the West Midlands.

Soon after beginning the trail, the scenery opens out leaving industrial units behind and heading into open countryside, with views across the Erewash Valley. The [River Erewash](#) tracks close by the canal here, usually not much more than a shallow stream. After passing the two bridges you begin to approach **Eastwood Lock (No 73)**. You wouldn't know it now, as the area looks to be one of the most rural parts of the trail, but the countryside to the left here was once occupied by Eastwood Colliery, one of many coal mines in the area. The colliery (closed in 1884 due to subsidence) was served not only by the Erewash Canal, but also the Nottingham Canal and a branch of the Great Northern Railway which crossed both waterways. Portage the lock on the towpath side, where the bank is low. The put-in point after the lock can either be done on the tow path side, down the grass bank, or by crossing the footbridge – the second option is usually the easiest, especially after wet weather. As you

set off again note the remains of stone buttresses – these once held the viaduct carrying the railway over the canal – its embankment can still be seen to the right, heading off across the valley.

The canal soon crosses over the River Erewash as you begin to approach Shipley Lock. This area was once a thriving wharf, bringing coal down from Shipley Colliery via an inclined-wagonway, a predecessor of the railways that would soon out-compete the canals. Wagons descended the valley under gravity to the wharf, before being connected to a chain system to haul them back up to the colliery under steam power. The pub on the right, opposite the tow path, is now a popular location for car and motorcycle rallies. Portage **Shipley Lock (No 72)** on the towpath side. To get back on the water carefully cross the road, where there is a much easier bank, rather than using the steeper bank between the road and lock.



The canal continues travelling through open countryside, with ponds between the canal and the railway providing a haven for wildlife. Soon the fields to the right give way to housing and playing fields, as the canal begins to track the outskirts of Ilkeston. To the left you will begin to see the steel-lattice construction of the [Bennerley Viaduct](#). A Grade II* listed structure, the viaduct opened in 1878 and carried one of the many railways in the area, connecting Ilkeston with Kimberley. The viaduct is now being converted to become a cycle route linking the towns of Ilkeston and Kimberley. Initially built as Bennerley Ironworks the area at the base of the viaduct was also once a thriving industrial area.



The next lock, shortly after passing Bennerley Viaduct, is **Stenson's Lock (No 71)**. You can paddle fairly close to the lock to take advantage of the low sides for portaging, with similarly low sides below the lock for the get-in point. Shortly after Stenson's Lock you approach Ilkeston Town Football Club and arrive at **Barker's Lock (No 70)**. Although a simple portage, the road which passes over the canal here can be busy, with poor visibility for drivers crossing the bridge. Where possible use the steps down and under the road bridge, which also brings you to the best place to re-enter the canal too.

There is a pause in the portaging for a short while now, as you meander around the green fringe of Ilkeston, passing playing fields and allotments before the River Erewash again comes close to the cut. The next lock is **Potter's Lock (No 69)**, again an easy portage with low banks at the approach to the lock both upstream and downstream. Take note however of the outfall from the byflow channel, opposite the towpath below the lock. This can produce fairly strong flows, especially after heavy rain. The next lock is **Green's Lock (No 68)**, which is a simple portage with low banks. This final part of the trail is the most urban of the route, with the canal fringed by industrial units and the railway on one side, and the housing estates of the town the other. Despite this there is still plenty of green to be seen, and a variety of wildlife using the tree-lined banks.



As you approach the next road crossing you reach the final portage of the day at **Gallows Inn Lock (No 67)**. The eerie name of the lock reflects that it is believed to have been close to the location of a gallows from the 14th century to the 1800s – providing a sombre entry to the town at its main historic road link with Nottingham. The lock itself is easy to portage (get off the water before arriving at the cycle barrier), but as with Barker’s Lock it is possible to use the tow path under the road bridge rather than crossing the road itself. There is a small car park here, which could be used instead of the larger facility at Gallows Inn Playing Fields.

After portaging at the pub, there is only a very short distance until you reach the end of Part 1 of the Erewash Trail. The bank side at Gallows Inn Playing Fields is low enough for a comfortable exit from the water. The tow path is a little narrow here however, so take note of other users, especially walkers and cyclists. The area is used for angling too, so be sure to exit without causing any undue disturbance.

Useful Information

Facilities at Langley Mill:

- The Great Northern Public House – offers a range of food and drinks. If using their toilet facilities please enquire at the bar and purchase a drink or food - <http://www.pubpeople.com/greatnorthern>
- KFC - <https://www.kfc.co.uk/find-us#/lat/53.016822839789576/lng/-1.3259124755859375>

Facilities at Gallows Inn:

- There is a pub, recently reopened, next to Gallows Inn Lock.

Both the [Derby & Sandicore Canal Trust](#) and [ECP&DA](#) put a great deal of work into maintaining, restoring and improving the canal system we paddle today – and in helping create more canals to paddle on in the future. As membership organisations, paddlers can join them (or the [Canal & River Trust’s ‘Friends’ scheme](#)) and get involved to help these organisations secure a strong future for our waterways. The Erewash Canal Rangers also help to look after the waterway, running regular volunteer days and reporting issues. For more information visit <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteer>.

Licences: The waterways in this trail are managed by Canal and Rivers Trust, and require paddlers to hold a licence. British Canoeing membership includes a full annual licence for this waterway – please take your membership card with you as this acts as your licence. Non-members can either purchase a British Canoeing membership from www.britishcanoeing.org.uk or buy licences direct from www.canalrivertrust.org.uk.

Why Not Try?

Canal & River Trust’s waterways offer a range of opportunities for activities. From angling to country walks, and from boating holidays to volunteer lock keeping. Visit [their website](#) to find out more!



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CANOEING SAFETY ADVICE

Spending an afternoon or day canoeing on a Canoe Trail can be a fun way to experience nature, help you to stay fit and healthy and enjoy spending time with friends and family. It can also be a dangerous journey, if appropriate safety guidelines are overlooked. To help make sure you remain safe at all times, read on to see our canoeing safety advice guidelines.

Wear appropriate clothing

Always wear shoes. Rocks, rough terrain and river beds present serious hazards to boaters without the proper attire. Nearly 90% of all boating injuries are attributed to lack of proper footwear. Other canoe safe clothing includes hats, gloves, additional dry clothing, and layered items which can easily be removed. Take or wear a windproof top and course always wear a buoyancy aid - for children make sure the crotch straps are used.

Be sure to:

- Know the weather forecast and check the water conditions before you set out canoeing. There is an [Environment Agency](#) website where information concerning river levels can be found. We recommend checking this before heading out as the river levels can rise and fall quite quickly in wet or dry conditions.
- Observe navigation rules for this waterway – and check the [Canal & River Trust website](#) for any events that may be happening on the waterway, for example where there may be large numbers of motorised boats or anglers.
- Check to see if there are any events on the waterways when you wish to travel.
- Check that your equipment is well maintained and ready for the water.
- Check that your boat has the required buoyancy to keep it afloat in the event of a capsize

ALWAYS be certain to let others know where you're going and when you're expected to return.

MAKE SURE that the journey you plan is within your capabilities.

MAKE SURE you never paddle alone.

Equipment Checklist

Use the canoeing safety advice checklist below to make sure you have everything you need:

- Boat
- Paddle
- Buoyancy Aid
- Bailer/sponge
- Small First Aid Kit
- Phone (in a waterproof bag)
- Drinking water and snacks
- Suitable clothing for the weather

Environmental Good Practice

One of the great things about paddling a canoe trail is enjoying the journey and different environments that you paddle through. So when you are out on the water please consider the following things to help keep the wonderful waterways and environment as you found them and to avoid accidentally disturbing wildlife and their habitats.

- Take your **litter** home with you
- Keep **noise** to a minimum
- Where possible keep to any **designated paths or launching points**.
- **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.
- Canoe a **safe distance away from wildlife**. If you see signs of disturbance move away quietly.
- Familiarise yourself with the local area, its **sensitive places and protected areas**
- On rivers, **avoid paddling over gravel banks** in low water conditions – they may contain fish spawn.
- 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
- When clearing litter left by others, **handle it with care**.
- **Be the eyes and ears on the water**. Report pollution, wildlife problems, damage, incidents etc to the relevant authorities: **Canal & River Trust**, Emergencies: 0800 47 999 47

RSPCA for wildlife and animals in distress: 0300 1234 999 (24 hours)

Environment Agency: 0800 80 70 60 (24 hours)



CHECK, CLEAN, DRY

Help minimise the spread of invasive aquatic species and disease by following the campaign before putting your canoe and equipment in and out of the water (some invasive species can survive in damp or wet conditions for five or six days on water recreation clothing and equipment).

- **CHECK** all your equipment and clothing for living organisms and plants fragments. Pay particular attention to areas that are damp and hard to inspect.
- **CLEAN** and wash all equipment, clothing and footwear thoroughly away from water source. If you do come across any organisms, leave them at the water body where you found them. When practical, completely dry out all equipment and clothing before going to a new site.
- **DRY** all equipment and clothing - some species can live for many days in moist conditions. Dry your kit with towels. Make sure you don't transfer water elsewhere.

Canoeists and kayakers take environmental concerns very seriously and already follow existing voluntary environmental codes of conduct. You can find more information about canoeing and the environment in British Canoeing's two publications covering inland and coastal paddling '[You and Your Canoe](#)'. Both are available on the British Canoeing website.

*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. **This trail was last reviewed in July 2016***

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