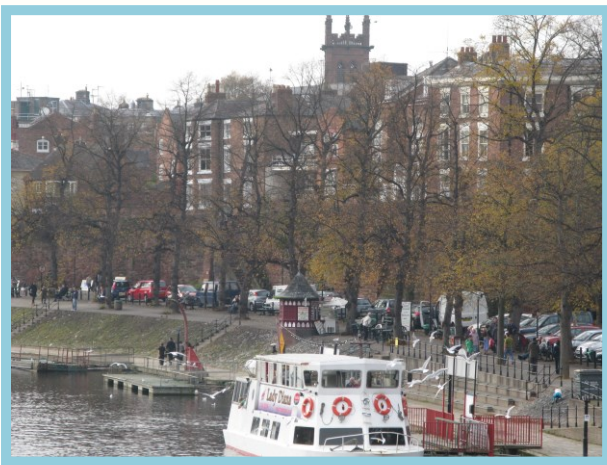


River Dee-Farndon Bridge to Chester

Moderate Trail: Please be aware that the grading of this trail was set according to normal water levels and conditions. Weather and water level/conditions can change the nature of trail within a short space of time so please ensure you check both of these before heading out.



Route Summary

Mention of the Welsh River Dee usually conjures up a vision of the major white water river flowing through Llangollen, but this is a trip on the lower river once it has met its flood plain much lower down, and slowed down. This is a gentle meander through pretty countryside. The end is right in the heart of Chester, a magnificent sight to see

Start Directions

Farndon Bridge SJ 412544 CH3 6QF

Farndon Bridge (between Holt and Farndon villages – access on right side upstream of bridge at picnic site) is the start on the A534, with Wales on the left bank, and England on the right

Distance: 11 miles

Approximate Time: 3-4 Hours

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

Type of Trail: One Way

Waterways Travelled: River Dee

Type of Water: River but check on river conditions

Portages and Locks: None

Nearest Town: Chester

Start: Farndon Bridge SJ 412544 CH3 6QF

Finish: Chester, Queen's Bridge, egress on right bank to vehicle parking SJ 408659 CH1 1SD

O.S. Sheets: 117 Chester & Wrexham

Licence Information: A Licence Is not required for this river

Local Facilities: Little at Farndon (one pub), but toilets in Chester, including at Sandy Lane, the egress point. Chester is a major city with all facilities.

Finish Directions

Chester, Queen's Bridge, egress on right bank to vehicle parking SJ 408659 CH1 1SB

Description

Access the river directly from the car park and then start to make your way down stream.

After a mile and a half is the village of Almere, astride both banks, on a very tight double bend in the river where the river almost comes back on itself, making you think that an oxbow lake is in the making. A small ferry used to operate across the river here. The river Alun joins from the left at the beginning of the bend.

Another few miles down, Pulford Brook also joins from the left, the brook looking much canalised, like a ditch.

After 6 miles, you are entering the Duke of Westminster's estate, Eaton Hall, and it is England on both banks. Aldford village is on the left, some way back from the river (built to be above flood level). Iron Bridge follows, a private estate bridge, with Eaton Hall itself on the left bank.

After Crook of Dee, a long bend round to the right, then left, Eccleston Ferry is obvious on the map, each side of the river having a straight road down to it. Ferry farm is on the right bank, (no access), and the pretty Eccleston village on the left side. This side could be a pick-up point, with a public road.

The next object of interest is the fairly recent Chester by-pass bridge, the A55, high above you.

As Chester obviously appears, the first sign of civilization is the Red House pub on the right bank, with a jetty, and a welcome for waterbourne travellers.

The river bends to the left into the centre of town, with many fine houses on the right bank, and Queen's park on the left, a pleasant water meadow.

Earl's Ferry is a passenger ferry just before the long left-hand bend, and you will then see a metal pedestrian bridge in front of you. On the right bank is Chester Motor Boat Club, followed by a sailing club and a rowing club.

Sandy Lane car park is on the right, marked by a small wooden jetty and a slipway, the easiest egress.

Downstream of here is Chester Weir, often used by kayakers, and also possible to shoot in an open canoe. Fish steps are on the left-hand side of the weir. This is the tidal limit of the river.



Useful Information

The waterways on this trail don't require you to have a licence to paddle on them. However if you paddle regularly you should consider becoming a member of British Canoeing. A British Canoeing membership gives you a whole range of benefits including a licence to paddle on 4500km of Britain's waterways and Civil Liability Insurance, worth up to £10 Million. Not only will membership help save you money, it will give you peace of mind when out on the waterways. For more information on British Canoeing membership please [click here](#).

Please visit the [Environment Agency](#) website for information on river conditions

The City of Chester is one of the most important old Roman towns in Britain, and well worth a visit in its own right. The town walls of 2 miles long are some of the most complete in England. Chester saw invasions by the Romans, Saxons, Danes, Vikings, and then Normans. Silting up of the former estuary diminished the town's port, but there was a Victorian revival, along with canals, roads and railways, leading to the city's reputation as a major holiday and visit town.

The main shopping area, The Rows, in the centre of the old town are one of Chester's most distinctive features, with both ground-floor and first floor shops on balconies and walkways, certainly dating from the 14th century.

There is too much of historical significance to mention here, but it would be a shame to canoe into Chester, and not sample its many delights and tourist attractions.

Further useful information can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.cityofchester.org/>

<http://www.visitchester.com/>

<http://www.chestertourist.com/>

<http://www.chester360.co.uk/>

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.
- 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 capsized

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



Photo by James Carnegie

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 advice 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 [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 April 2013***

© British Canoeing copyright 2015

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 British Canoeing copyright and the title of the publication specified.

