

A picturesque trail down the majestic River Thames which takes you to the award winning Sonning Lock and back.

- 1 Launch from the slipway at the waterside centre and turn right, downstream towards Sonning Lock.
- 2 This section is known as Dreadnought Reach. As you go downstream to your left is the Caversham Rowing Lakes, otherwise known as the Redgrave-Pinsent Rowing Lake.
- 3 You will paddle along a peaceful stretch of the Thames, with trees to one side and open parkland to the other, until you reach Sonning Lock at around 1.5 miles.
- 4 Sonning Lock is a particularly pretty lock. During the summer months refreshments are available in Sonning Lock Gardens on the lock island. If you would like to get out for refreshments the canoe portage is clearly marked on the right hand side as you enter the lock.
- 5 When you decide to return upstream put back in at the same place you got out and enjoy the sheer beauty and diverse wildlife of the area as you meander back to the start point.



## Key Info



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

**Start and finish:** Wokingham Waterside Centre, Thames Valley Park Drive, Thames Valley Park RG6 1PQ

**Distance:** 3 miles

**Time:** 1 hour

**Locks/Portages:** 0

**OS Map:** Explorer 159 Reading, Wokingham and Pangbourne



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



**Wokingham Waterside Centre:** This is a water sports and conference venue which is a completely self funded registered charity.

The centre is at the Reading end of the A329M. There is a huge field for picnics here too and an easy put in. The car park has a height restriction but you can easily park on the road if needed.

In the summer Marsport, the canoe shop at the centre, sells ice cream. Giving you the perfect excuse to relax by the river after your paddle.

**Sonning Lock:** There was a form of weir - probably a flash lock - here at Sonning way back in the 1500's. The first pound lock was installed in 1773, built in fir wood by the Thames Navigation Commissioners. It wasn't long before it was rebuilt in oak as fir was found to be unsuitable. During the winter of 2004-5, the existing pre-1970's wooden gates were replaced with new steel gates.

There has been a mill at Sonning for centuries - three mills are described in the Domesday Book of 1086. In the 1700's the owner, William Billingshurst, spent £60 a year keeping the floodgates and engines in repair.

To the right of the lock is the picturesque village of Sonning.

**Redgrave-Pinsent Rowing Lake:** Named after Sir Steve Redgrave and Sir Matthew Pinsent, this lake and its boathouse were specifically designed for training use and provide facilities for the GB rowing squad.

<https://wokinghamwatersidecentre.com/>

<https://www.visitthames.co.uk/about-the-river/river-thames-locks/sonning-lock>

## 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 Environment Agency 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](http://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk) or buy licenses direct from [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)

Visit our website  
[britishcanoeing.org.uk](http://britishcanoeing.org.uk)  
for more information

