

# RIVER LEA NAVIGATION: LEA BRIDGE TO HERTFORD

TRIP TYPE: SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE: TRAIN FROM HERTFORD EAST TO LEA BRIDGE, LONDON,  
CYCLE FROM THERE TO HERTFORD, ALONG THE  
RIVER LEA NAVIGATION

DISTANCE: 27 MILES

TIME: 3.25 HOURS, 8.3 mph + TRAIN JOURNEY (50 MINS)

NICHOLSON: GUIDE 1, pp 121-131

COSTS: FREE PARKING AT HERTFORD, LOW COST LONDON  
RAIL FARE WITH TAP IN / TAP OUT CARD

DIFFICULTY: FAIR

OVERVIEW: An easy ride with a very good towpath all the way out of London. From then on it becomes progressively worse, but the scenery is good and semi-rural all the way to Hertford. There are plenty of pubs and cafes along the route.

Note: the River Lea and River Lee are different spellings of the same waterway. It is also called the Bow River as it approaches the River Thames.

## 1. TRAIN TO LEA BRIDGE

Park for free on Tamworth Road, Hertford SG13 7DD, at the far end of the street from the town and station. Cycle to the station. Use your bank card or Oyster card to tap in - don't buy a ticket from the machine as it is much more expensive.

Take the train to Tottenham Hale. If there is a long wait for a connection to Lea Bridge (i.e. you just missed the half-hourly connection which leaves from the same platform)

leave the station and cycle back over the railway to the canal. Turn right (south) and cycle down to the Princess of Wales at the top end of Hackney Marshes, which is the start of the ride (if you are joining up with the adjoining ride described under London Canals. Otherwise take the train to Lea Bridge, turn right out of the station and take the A104 to the Princess of Wales pub.

## 2. LEA BRIDGE TO FEILDES WEIR (20 MILES)

From the Princess of Wales head north. The towpath changes sides a number of times. At Springfield Park it is easier to use the track through the park, emerging at the Boat House (café, rowing club) as the towpath is narrow and intended only for boaters.

The towpath is then very good all the way out of London to the M25 and White Water Centre, where it changes to compacted earth and gravel, but is still wide, flat and smooth. There is good scenery along the country park and nature reserves.

At Braxbourne cross the bridge to The Crown pub and continue along the right-hand side. The towpath is narrow and poor for a while, and is partly along a rutted track.

At Dobbs Weir cross the bridge to the left-hand side, then cross the walkway over the unusually shaped weir and turn right.



### 3. FEILDES WEIR TO HERTFORD (8 MILES) <sup>3</sup>

At Feildes Weir the navigation splits: head right to Bishops Stortford, left to Hertford. Take the left - the River Lee navigation.

From now on the towpath is much worse, with a narrow earth path, overgrown vegetation, and a few seriously big tree roots. However the scenery continues to be nice, and even more rural.

Cycle through Ware, famous for its riverside gazebos, and continue a few more miles into Hertford to the basin. Cross the bridge and cycle back through the town centre up Railway Street and back to Tamworth Road.



One of Ware's famous gazebos