

GRAND UNION: MILTON KEYNES TO TRING STATION

TRIP TYPE: SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE: PARK CAR AT ALDBURY, CYCLE TO TRING STATION, TAKE THE TRAIN TO MILTON KEYNES, CYCLE BACK TO TRING STATION AND ALDBURY.

DISTANCE: 26.7 MILES CYCLING

TIME: 3 HOURS 45 MINS, 8.5 mph

NICHOLSON: GUIDE 1 pp 56, 59, 67-73, PLUS TRAIN JOURNEY

COSTS: FREE PARKING AT ALDBURY, TRAIN FROM MILTON KEYNES TO TRING £12.60

DIFFICULTY: MODERATE

OVERVIEW: An interesting ride taking in the sights of Milton Keynes and some nice countryside, with a good village pub to finish.

1. ALDBURY TO MILTON KEYNES

Park the car by the pond in the village of Aldbury, near the Greyhound Inn, HP23 5RT. Cycle to Tring Station, just over a mile down the hill. Take the hourly train to Milton Keynes (22 min).

2. MILTON KEYNES TO LEIGUTON BUZZARD

Coming out of the station go straight on to Midsummer Boulevard, where you can take in the sights of central MK. Keep going through Centre:MK to Campbell Park, and onwards until you reach the canal. For a quieter option, use the parallel Avebury Boulevard. You may be surprised at how pleasant an environment the town is if you've only ever previously suffered the interminable roundabouts.

Once at the Grand Union canal turn right. You can follow the towpath, or there is a wide metalled path running parallel all the way to the Lakes Estate. Take care at Bridge 87 - it is easy to lose the path and end up in the housing estate. There is redevelopment at Campbell Wharf (as of 2021) and a new three-way bridge (see below) so look out for the signs.

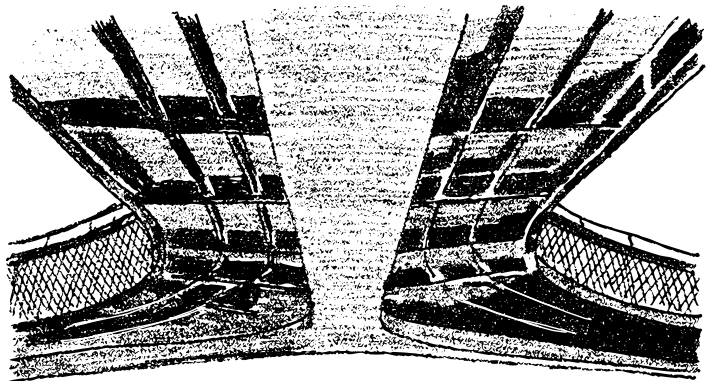
Once out of town take care to look for signs as the towpath changes sides regularly - first at Stoke Hammond, then back after Three Locks - don't go into the car park here!

The towpath quality drops once out of town - some compacted earth and gravel sections but still ride-able. The quality picks up again once into urban Leighton Buzzard.

3. LEIGHTON BUZZARD TO TRING STATION & ALDBORN

When heading out of Leighton Buzzard, especially once past Church Lock (29) the towpath quality is poor. Some sections are badly metalled, much is rotted, potholed earth, with grass sections at locks. Paths are narrower, with waist hedges impeding progress.

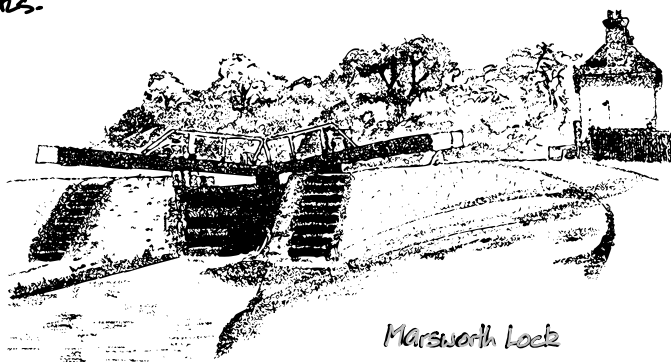
Underside of the new
3-way pedestrian
cycling bridge at
Campbell Wharf,
Milton Keynes



Look out for potholes in the bank - it is easy to catch your wheel and fall into the water.

At Marsworth the Aylesbury branch heads off to the right (west), and a mile further on down, past the locks, the Wendover Arm does the same. These arms are a ride in themselves.

Take care where the path changes to the right before Marsworth Locks, at the Anglers Retreat Footbridge, as there is still a path on the left but you will have difficulty crossing back over at the locks.



Marsworth Lock

The final section through the cutting is better. There is a British Waterways sign by the wide steps leading up to Tring Station, then it's a mile ride uphill back to Aldbury. The Greyhound Inn has an all day menu and a decent pint of Badger.