

COVENTRY CANAL

FAZELEY JUNCTION TO BEDWORTH

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TRIP TYPE: SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE: TAKE THE TRAIN FROM BEDWORTH TO TAMWORTH, AND CYCLE BACK ALONG THE COVENTRY CANAL

DISTANCE: 23 MILES

TIME: 3 HOURS, 8.2 mph

NICHOLSON: GUIDE 3, PP 53-59

COSTS: FREE PARKING AT BEDWORTH. TRAIN FROM BEDWORTH TO TAMWORTH £7.70 (1 PER HOUR)

DIFFICULTY: FAIR

OVERVIEW: Not the most exciting of rides, but easy to navigate apart from the initial ride through Tamworth. There is the odd free root, sloping towpath and protruding piece of sheet piling (watch your tyres!) but generally it's fine. There's only a couple of pubs en route, and nowhere worth mentioning for your post-ride pint.

1. BEDWORTH TO FAZELEY JUNCTION (3 MILES CYCLING)

Park your car in Mitchell Road, Bedworth, CV12 9HP. Go back to Coalpit Fields Road, turn right and head up to the station which is on your right, across the main road. Access to the platform for trains to Tamworth is just before the bridge. There is 1 train per hour, no bike reservation required.

Emerging from Tamworth station bear south on the A513 Saxon Drive past Aldi down to what is effectively a massive roundabout. At the pedestrian crossing cross the road towards Frankie & Benny's. Turn left on the pavement and cross over the bridge. Drop down the slope and go straight

Across the cycleway crossroads towards the snowdome. Just before you get to it bear left under the 'roundabout' to be alongside Peeters Way, A51. The cycleway chicanes left under Peeters Way, and continues on the left-hand side. After 1/2 mile, and passing under the A5, the path bears left up to the canal. Join the towpath and head south (turn right). Continue to Fazeley Junction, about a mile.

2. FAZELEY JUNCTION TO BEDWORTH (20 MILES)

This is a significant canal junction, taking boats into the heart of Birmingham, as well as up to the Trent & Mersey, or into the east Midlands, so take a good look round.

Turn round and head back the way you came. The towpath is good all the way out of Tamworth, although compacted earth and gravel it is wide and flat. There are some wide earth sections through nice country parks.

After Polesworth conditions weren't a little, but are still decent. The towpath improves again at the start of Atherstone Locks, and continues to be good through Hartshill and Blunston to Marston Junction (where the Ashby Canal joins the Coventry Canal).



From the Ashby Canal junction to Bridge 13 at Bedworth conditions continue to be good (the far side of the bridge through to Hawkesbury Junction being pretty poor, as described in the Coventry to Rugby ride).

Climb the shallow steps before Bridge 13, or continue under the bridge and use the slope at the other side. Cross the bridge and return to your car along Coalpits Fields Road.

I went to The Boat Inn near Hawkesbury Junction for a pint, but I wouldn't recommend it - The Greyhound across the junction is probably a better bet.



Apple Pie Lane Bridge, Hartshill

