

# GRAND UNION : RICKMANSWORTH, SLOUGH ARM TO PADDINGTON ARM JUNCTION

TRIP TYPE : solo cycle

OBJECTIVE : cycle the Grand Union from Rickmansworth along Slough Arm and back, down to junction with Paddington Arm.  
2 trains back to Rickmansworth.

DISTANCE : 25 miles cycling

TIME : 3 hours cycling (5-6 hours in total)

NICHOLSON : Guide 1 pp 38, 39, 44, 45, 48-51

COSTS : parking free, train Hayes & Harlington to Paddington £7,  
Marylebone to Rickmansworth £7.50

DIFFICULTY : moderate



OVERVIEW : A slightly complicated day's cycling due to the 2-part train journey back to the start point. Overall it will take 5-6 hours to complete, longer if you find a decent pub which I didn't, although I was tempted by the (expensive) craft beer bar at Paddington.

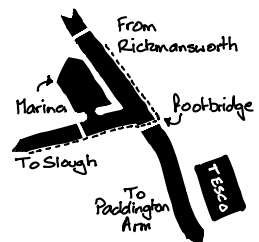
The towpaths are generally poor, rough earth and gravel, but mostly not sloping and wide enough. Muddy in parts when wet. Plenty of nettles and brambles to irritate bare arms.

## 1. RICKMANSWORTH TO SLOUGH (15 MILES)

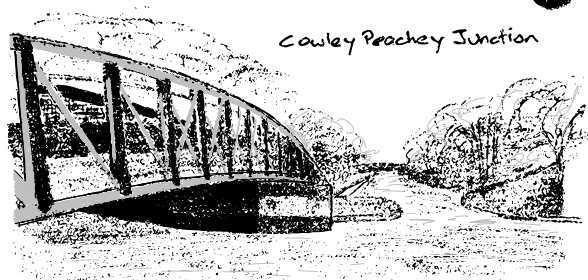
Park for free on Sheffield Avenue WD3 1NL. It is a narrow residential road with a few small-minded residents so park thoughtfully. It is a 5 min ride to the canal. Drop down to the towpath near Lock 81 (where the bitze unfriendly café is) using the sloping walkway just over the bridge.

The towpath is rough even while riding out of town. Decent scenery though - nature reserves and lakes all the way to Denham. The towpath changes sides a few times - at The Malt Shovel cross to the pub side. At Cowley Deachey look out for the marina on your right (the entrance is on the Slough Arm. If you reach

Cowley Deachey Junction



The big Tesco you've missed the Slough Arm junction, which has no signpost. It is accessed over the metal footbridge by the Marina.



The Slough Arm is unremarkable for all of its 5 miles. The top path is rough and narrow in places. About half-way along there are steep steps up just past a bridge. On arrival at Slough Basin you are greeted by rats, rubbish, weeds and security fencing. Turn around quickly and head back.

## 2. SLOUGH BASIN TO HAYES & HARLINGTON (10 MILES)

Once back at the junction turn right over the footbridge and continue on a good metalled path through parkland between Yewsey and West Drayton. After 3½ miles you reach the Paddington Arm junction. That completes the section, so return a mile to Hayes & Harlington station.

## 3. TRAIN JOURNEY BACK TO RICKMANSWORTH

Take a frequent train into Paddington. Use TfL as Great Western do not allow cycles unless pre-booked. Head up the main ramp out of the station, avoiding the small bear with the red hat. Continue up London Street to Sussex Gardens, which has a cycle lane. Turn left. Sussex Gardens becomes Old Marylebone Road. Cross Marylebone Road A501 to arrive at Marylebone Station, which is rather quaint. Catch the Aylesbury train back to Rickmansworth. Make sure you are on the correct line - there are 2 lines to Aylesbury! At Rickmansworth Station cycle down through the town centre, over the bridge, and back to Sheffield Avenue.

