

# SHROPSHIRE UNION CANAL NANTWICH TO ELLESMERE PORT

1

TRIP TYPE: SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE: CYCLE FROM NANTWICH TO ELLESMERE PORT ALONG THE SHROPSHIRE UNION CANAL, RETURNING BY TRAIN FROM ELLESMERE PORT.

DISTANCE: 32.5 MILES

TIME: 4 HOURS, 8.1 mph

NICHOLSON: GUIDE 4, DP 105, 106, 110-119

COSTS: FREE PARKING IN NANTWICH. TRAIN FROM ELLESMERE PORT TO NANTWICH AN EXTORTIONATE £31.70 (SEE BELOW FOR CHEAPER OPTION), 1 PER HOUR

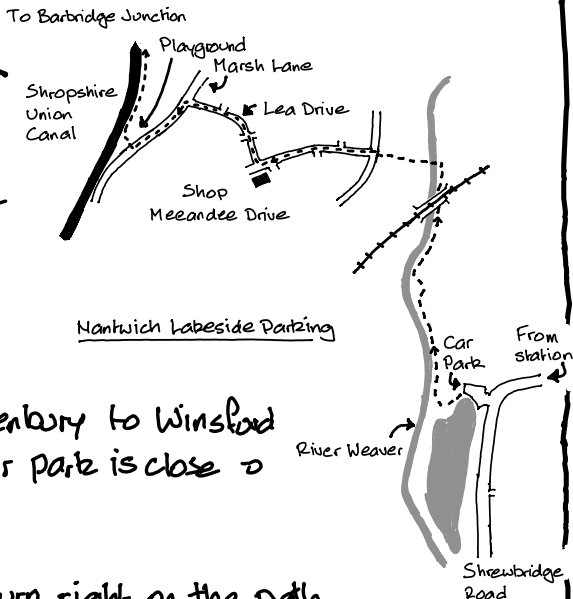
DIFFICULTY: MODERATE

OVERVIEW: A ride of two halves. The first section, from Nantwich to Chester, has a very poor towpath in parts, and potentially you will have to ride on the busy main road for a while. Once approaching Chester it improves dramatically, and the towpath is good and fast all the way up to Ellesmere Port.



## 1. NANTWICH TO CHESTER

Park your car at Lakeside Parking, at the corner of Shrewbridge Road and Park Road, Nantwich, CW5 7AG. Parking is free, and you can stop over in your campervan if you wish (e.g. if you are doing the Wrenbury to Winsford ride the following day). The car park is close to the River Weaver.



Cycle towards the river, and turn right on the path  
canalcycling.co.uk

passing under the railway line. Shortly after, turn left and cross the bridge over the river. Cross the park to Queens Drive and continue straight on to Meeanee Drive. Take the second right onto Lea Drive. At the end turn left onto Marsh Lane. Just past Canal-side Close, by the playpark on the right, you can cut through to the canal. Turn right on the towpath.

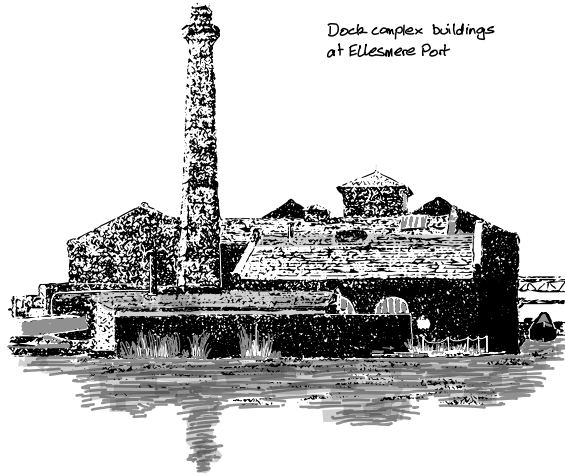
The towpath is good all the way out of Mankwich, and then turns to gravel. At Hurleston Junction (Llangollen Canal) continue straight on the narrowing towpath to Barbridge Junction, where the Middlewich Branch heads off to the right (north east). Continue straight on the Shropshire Union main-line. The towpath gradually deteriorates to earth and gravel, and is unkempt with nettles and brambles. The busy A51 runs alongside the canal at this point, and it is an easier, if more dangerous, option to ride along this for a few miles. If you do this, once past the Tollemache Arms pub, take the next left, Bunbury Road, back down to the canal and rejoin by the Bunbury Staircase Locks (Bunbury Lock Bridge 105).

The towpath continues to be hard going until you reach Golden Hook Bridge (115), where the Cheshire Cycleway joins the towpath. Where the cycleway diverts away again just before Faulkners Bridge (116) you again have the choice of the more difficult towpath, or staying on the cycleway to Waverton. If you take the cycleway/road, rejoin the canal at Egg Bridge (119).

Conditions are then much better going into Chester.



## 2. CHESTER TO ELLESMERE PORT

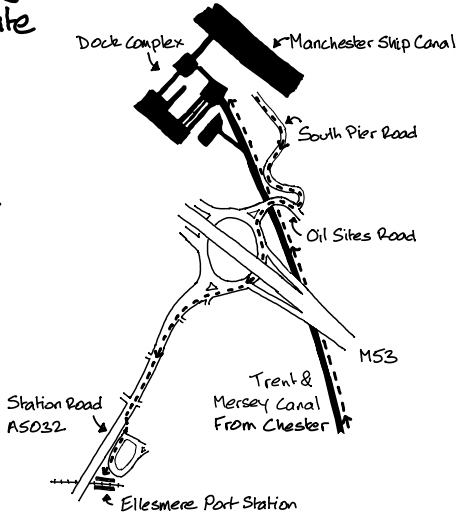


Dock complex buildings at Ellesmere Port

There are plenty of places for lunch and/or a refresher in Chester, and heading out of the city centre take a sharp right by Crane Wharf to head north. You then have good, fast going for the remaining 9 miles to Ellesmere Port, passing close to Chester Zoo, then under the M53 as you approach the National Waterways Museum

complex where the canal ends at the Manchester Ship Canal. It's worth allowing some time to look around this fascinating place before heading to the station.

Cycle up South Pier Road to the romantically named Oil Sites Road and turn right at the T junction. Carefully navigate the large roundabout under the M53 and take the A5032, Station Road. Just before the railway bridge cut through to the station on your left. Note that there is no lift if you need to change platforms - go over the road bridge.



Most connections will take you via Hooton, and services are infrequent (as well as being somewhat expensive). It can take 1.5-2 hours to get back to Nantwich. There are cheaper options (e.g. via Shrewsbury) if you use a ticket splitting app to find them, but they can take up to 3 hours. You are advised to plan your return journey (and timings) in advance.

