

GREENFIELD TO PICCADILLY

HUDDERSFIELD NARROW • ASHTON CANALS

1

TRIP TYPE : SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE : CYCLE FROM GREENFIELD UP TO THE WESTERN PORTAL OF STANDAGE TUNNEL. RETURN TO GREENFIELD, AND CONTINUE DOWN THE HUDDERSFIELD NARROW CANAL THROUGH STALYBRIDGE THEN TAKE THE ASHTON CANAL INTO CENTRAL MANCHESTER, FINISHING AT DUCIE STREET JUNCTION. RETURN BY TRAIN FROM MANCHESTER PICCADILLY TO GREENFIELD.

DISTANCE : 19.5 MILES

TIME : 2.5 HOURS, 7.7 mph

NICHOLSON : GUIDE 5, PP 58-61, 184-185

COSTS : FREE PARKING AT GREENFIELD. TRAIN FROM PICCADILLY TO GREENFIELD £6.40

DIFFICULTY : MODERATE

OVERVIEW : This is a straightforward ride which I did as the second of a 2-dayer (the first being Hebden Bridge to Piccadilly). It is classed as moderate because the towpaths are a bit tricky on the initial part, improving as you approach Manchester city centre, and there are several steps to negotiate. Starting in the relative wilds of The Pennines, the scenery gradually becomes more industrial and commercial, with views of the Etihad Stadium, and the new Coop Live arena as you approach the regenerated New Islington marina with its restaurants, bars and apartments. To ensure the marina is taken in the ride ends by going along it before finishing at Ducie Street Junction.

1. GREENFIELD TO STANDAGE TUNNEL WEST PORTAL (2.5 MILES)

Park in Wellington Road, Greenfield, OL3 7AD, for free. Cycle back to Chew Valley Road, turn right, cross the river, and turn into the

Kingfisher pub car park. Join the towpath here and turn right, up the canal.

At Saddleworth there are steps up to the High Street, A670. Cross the road and continue along the towpath, which passes through the town, crossing Den Lane and the River Tame on an aqueduct.

There is a series of tricky locks past Uppermill, with steps and cobbles which are slippery when wet. You will need to push your bike up these. There is Grandpa Greenes Café by the summit lock 32w if you need a coffee.



Standage Tunnel
West Portal
Huddersfield Narrow Canal

Continue round either side of the basin to the tunnel entrance, which is barred with some nice wrought ironwork and only open to tourist boats.

2. STANDAGE TUNNEL TO DUCIE STREET JUNCTION (17 MILES)

Turn round and return to Greenfield, again taking care down the Flight of locks, and on the steps at Saddleworth High Street.

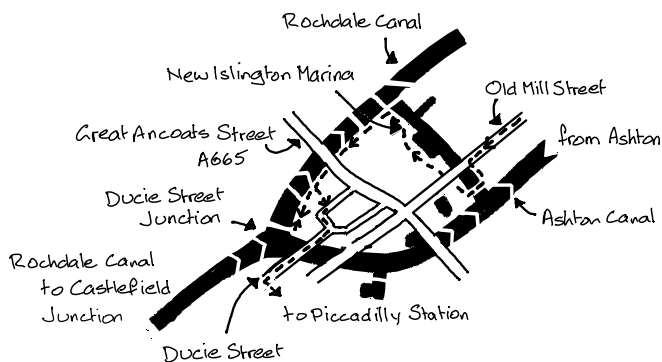
Scout Tunnel is 200m long, and has a rough slabbed and cobbled railed footpath. You will need to walk through and it's worth having a light or torch to avoid tripping.

There is a good quality towpath through Stalybridge, with a few shallow steps to negotiate. As you approach Ashton the towpath veers away from the canal at a tunnel under Asda supermarket, up a few steps, and emerges into the car park. Continue straight

alongside the store and cross the roundabout onto the exit road past the petrol station. At the lights (Cavendish Street) turn right, then after 100m turn left by the bus stop onto a road which leads back to the towpath.

Soon you arrive at Portland Basin, where the Peak Forest Canal joins, and the Ashton Canal starts. Continue straight on, with a good quality metalled towpath all the way into Manchester. Pass the Etihad stadium and Coop Live arena and continue to New Islington basin.

At the time of writing (Autumn 2024) the last section of towpath before New Islington marina is closed, and you need to veer off and head down Old Mill Street to the marina.



Cross the bridge at the Ashton Canal end of the marina and cycle the full length of the marina to the Rochdale Canal, where you turn left. There is a difficult cobbled towpath towards Ducie Street Junction. Just before the

junction there are shallow steps with benches and trees on your left (go right up to the junction first if you wish). Exit up here and along the path to Ducie Street, then right towards Piccadilly Station approach.

Trains to Greenfield are 1 per hour, no cycle reservation required. Plenty of good pubs to choose from in the area, the most convenient being the Piccadilly Tap on the station approach.