

# READING TO NEWBURY KENNET & AVON CANAL

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TRIP TYPE: SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE: TAKE THE TRAIN FROM NEWBURY TO READING, CYCLE  
BACK ALONG THE KENNET & AVON CANAL.

DISTANCE: 23 MILES

TIME: 3 HOURS, 7.9 mph

NICHOLSON: GUIDE 7, pp 98-107

COSTS: FREE PARKING AT NEWBURY. TRAIN FROM NEWBURY TO  
READING £8.40

DIFFICULTY: HARD (AS OF SUMMER 2024, DUE TO BREACHES)

OVERVIEW: The ride starts in urban Reading, with a short cycle  
along the River Thames, after which you follow the Kennet & Avon  
Canal through the centre of Reading and out into the countryside.  
Due to a number of breaches (as of Spring 2024) there are some  
very difficult sections, and you are guaranteed to get your feet  
wet. The second half of the ride is easier. The very last section  
into Newbury also has a breach (as of Spring 2024).



## 1. NEWBURY TO KENNET MOUTH (1.5 M CYCLING)

Park in St. Georges Avenue, Newbury, RG14 5NY. This is the  
first road outside the Newbury parking permit zone. Cycle back  
down to Rockingham Road. Turn right then left into St. Michaels  
Road. Turn right across the railway, then left on a pedestrian  
path (Station Road) to the railway station. Trains to Reading  
are 3 per hour. Try to avoid the inter-city ones as explained  
above.

Use the north exit from Reading station onto Bagnall Way. If you  
come out of the main entrance turn left and left again under  
the railway to the roundabout. Cross Vastern Road and go down

the side of the circular Thames Water building to the River Thames. Turn right on the river path. Pass Caversham lock, through Kings Meadow to Horseshoe Bridge, where the Kennet joins the Thames.

## 2. KENNET MOUTH TO ALDERMASTON (11 MILES)

Cross the pedestrian bridge here, which has shallow steps, and turn right under the railway. Continue on the left side of the canal through the shopping centre.

At Bridge Street Bridge (2) by House of Frase, cross the river and continue on the right side of town. The towpath changes sides frequently, usually at swing bridges, and where there are canal sections. This section, as of Spring 2024, has several breaches. There will be signs saying the towpath is closed, but it is possible to continue. However you will definitely get your feet wet as some breaches are ankle deep and can't be cycled. The path gradually worsens, becoming grass only.

As you approach Theale there are more breaches, and the path is narrow and muddy. There are grass sections across fields, which are wet with the leakage from the canal.

At Utton Swing Bridge (25a) cross both the river and the canal to the right bank, and continue on a good quality path on the canal section.



Sluice at Theale, Kennet & Avon Canal

There is now a metalled path all the way to Aldermaston Wharf.

The Bott Inn at Aldermaston is open 12 until 11pm 7 days a week if you've had enough by now (there is also a railway station).

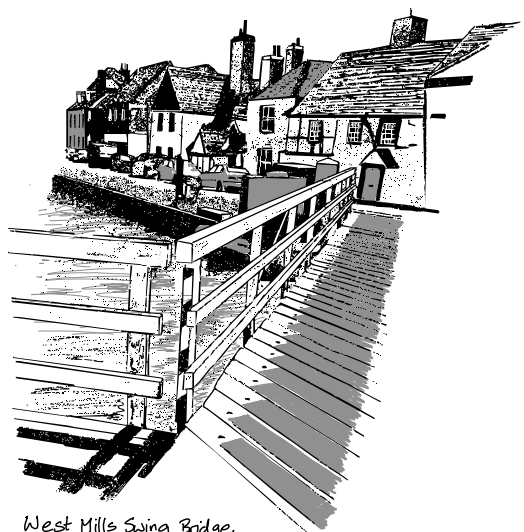
### 3. ALDERMASTON TO NEWBURY (9.5 MILES)



At Basingstoke Road (A340) in Aldermaston cross the canal to the left (do not follow the river round to the right).

Although the path is no longer metalled, it is good quality gravel and wide all the way to Newbury. Continue through Wodhampton and Thatcham.

If there is no breach at Newbur continue under the A339 to West Mills Swing Bridge 62, perhaps stopping for refreshment at the Lock, Stock & Barrel which is on your route. From here you can take Lock, Kennet Road, Craven Road and Rockingham Road back to your car.



West Mills Swing Bridge, Newbury

If the breach is still there leave the canal at Bulls Swing Bridge (48) and take Hambridge Lane into the town centre. Cross the roundabout onto Hambridge Road which becomes Kings Road. At the A339 turn left and cross to the station, retracing your steps to your car. [I did the last section from the Newbury side of the breach as part of my Newbury to Pawsey ride.]