

# Pangbourne - Reading (Thames Valley Park) River Thames



**Start** - Adventure Dolphin Centre, Pangbourne RG8 7DA

**Length** - Nine miles and two locks (It is possible to use the locks instead of getting out to portage them therefore this route is suitable for those with ambulant problems).

**Licence** - A Thames Licence is required

(<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/recreation/boating/31605.aspx> )

Canoe England Membership includes a Thames licence (take your membership card and sticker with you)

**Duration** - 1 day

Pangbourne is a small village in the banks of the Thames. It also has a railway station so it is possible to get to the river so with planning a car shuffle may not be needed.. <http://www.pangbourne-on-thames.com/>

There is a Pay and Display car park where you can leave your car next to Adventure Dolphin Centre, Pangbourne (<http://www.adventuredolphin.co.uk/>)

From there you need to take your canoes across the grass field to the river. There are lots of really easy places to launch.

Once on the river paddle downstream (ie away from Whitchurch Toll Bridge) towards Mapledurham Lock.. If you look left after about a mile you may well see fields full of Lamas and Alpacas.

Just before you get in to Mapledurham Lock you can see The Mapledurham Estate.

<http://www.mapledurham.co.uk/index.php> The Old Watermill at Mapledurham is the only mill on the Thames that is still operational. A mill on this site has been producing high quality stone ground flour since the time of the Domesday Survey

At the lock (canoe portage on the left) during the summer months a cup of tea and a slice of cake can be purchased alongside the lock keeper's cottage.

Once you put back in there is an ideal picnic spot on the corner with a little beach where lots of fun can be had playing in the water here. Do look out of the wildlife around here. There are freshwater mussels and eels too!! Too early for lunch? Well continue to paddle on down stream and you will find it hard to believe that the rural countryside is actually so close to Reading!

After about three miles from the lock you will come across some very large houses on the bank and on the other side (the site of Reading Festival <http://www.readingfestival.com/home/>) is a lovely green park area which has plenty of space to picnic etc. There are public toilets near to the car park at the Rowing Club. There is also a café at the back of the Rowing club.

On the other bank is Reading Canoe Club (<http://www.reading-canoe.org.uk/>) Travel under Caversham Bridge and on to Caversham Lock.

Caversham Lock is portaged right for canoes.. and there is a choice of two "put ins". Use the one furthest away if the lock is being emptied.

Once back on the river paddle on and you will pass a huge Tesco's and then the mouth of the Kennet and Avon Canal (this is the way to Reading town centre if you should want to go there ...its about a mile up stream) a few hundred yards further on you reach Wokingham Waterside Centre and this is your final destination. (<http://www.wokinghamwatersidecentre.com/> Wokingham Waterside Centre, Thames valley Park Drive, Thames Valley Park RG6 1PQ)

Portage right and again there is a huge field for picnics etc. There are public toilets behind the centre. There is a height restriction on the car park but one can easily park on the road so it's not a problem.