

£2.50

ROUTE

4

# Itchen River

Type of trail: Sea water – Tidal river

Region: South Hampshire



DIFFICULTY RATING  
3 PADDLES

# INSPIRING

canoeing



# SPORT

HAMPSHIRE & IOW

# 4

# Itchen River

Type of trail: Sea water – Tidal river  
Region: South Hampshire



ROUTE  
4

DIFFICULTY RATING  
3 PADDLES

## Itchen River

Type of trail: Sea water – Tidal river  
Region: South Hampshire

9 miles

Approximate distance:  
Up river from launch and recovery point.

9 miles  
Round trip

DIFFICULTY RATING  
3 PADDLES

3 hours

1.5 hours up river and  
1.5 hours return

Time depends on wind and tide.  
Paddling against wind and tide  
slows journey time and requires  
greater effort.

**S Start**  
Woodmill Plage  
Southampton,  
Hampshire:  
**SO18 2JS**  
**OS Grid Reference:**  
**SU 442 154**

**F Finish**  
Vosper Thornycroft half  
way 4.5miles return to  
start for round trip

**Road access**  
Car parking within  
50metres easy walk of  
launch and recovery

**Car shuttle required?**  
No - round trip.

9 miles

Approximate distance:  
Up river from launch and recovery point.

9 miles  
Round trip

## General Information

The River can be broken down into 3 parts as far as canoeing is concerned. Firstly the ring of navigation in Winchester city centre; this is the home of Winchester and District Canoe Club.

The second section is another freshwater section between Woodmill and Gaiters Mill. Most of this mile and a half section along Riverside Park and tree covered land up to Lower Itchen Country Park is detailed in the fabulous 'Pub Paddles Book'.

The final section is tidal and runs from Woodmill to where the River enters Southampton Water under the Itchen Bridge. This covers a distance of around 4.5 miles.

## The Trail

Launch from the beach outside the Woodmill Outdoor Centre. This is best done halfway between high/low tide and head down stream. On the other side of the Mill Building is the weir where

the freshwater Itchen joins the Estuary. The weir is affectionately known as the Woodmill Death Gorge. Paddle downstream past the University Boat Hard and round the double bends. Beware of fast moving rowing boats!

**2. Cobden Bridge**  
is named after Richard Cobden a politician and free trade campaigner. Just before the bridge is a grey houseboat based on the hull of a WW2 Motor Torpedo Boat.

**3. Rail Bridge**  
The main Southampton to Portsmouth line crosses the river at this point.

**4. Northam Bridge**  
was originally built as a Toll bridge and for a long time was the only means of crossing the river. Today this is the limit for larger vessels using the river.

**5. Paddle** around the long sweeping bend. On the left bank of the river is Spitfire Quay where the Supermarine Works were sited during WWII. The White Crown on the right bank of the river is St Marys Football Stadium home of Southampton FC.

**6. Itchen Bridge**  
The river bends to the left revealing a view of the Itchen Bridge. The bridge was built to replace the floating bridge that had been in use for 140 years. The Itchen Bridge is a Toll bridge. Under the bridge on the right is Southampton Water Activities Centre. There is a slipway and parking at Cross House Hard.

**7. On the left** is the site where Vosper Thornycroft used to build Warships and on the right is Dock Head where you can link to the Southampton Water Trail.

## Additional information

Woodmill Outdoor Centre for Canoeing Equipment and courses  
[www.woodmill.co.uk](http://www.woodmill.co.uk) or 023 8091 5746

**Portages**  
No portages, weirs or lock gates.

**Licences**  
Tidal river; no licence or Harbour dues.



**Accessibility**  
Easy access to launch and recovery point.

**Ease of access to the water**  
Car Parking within 50metres easy walk of launch and recovery. Access to water.



Maps covering the area:

OS 1:25,000: Southampton

## Padding Safety

Spending an afternoon canoeing can be a fun way to experience nature, get a great workout and spend time with friends and family. It can also be a dangerous journey, if appropriate safety guidelines are overlooked. Always follow these basic rules.

### Wear appropriate clothing

Always wear shoes. Rocks, rough terrain and river beds present serious hazards to boaters without the proper attire. Nearly 90% of all boating injuries are attributed to lack of proper footwear. Other canoe safe clothing includes hats, additional dry clothing, towels, and layered items which can easily be removed.

### Know the weather forecast

Find out the weather forecast before you set out on your Canoe Trail. The Met Office, BBC Weather and Local Marina Offices will have an up to date forecast.

### Local area

Familiarise yourself with the local area, its sensitive places and protected areas.

Be sure to:

- Leave the environment as you find it.
- Take your litter home with you.
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not damage bank side vegetation when launching or landing.
- Where possible keep to any designated paths or launching points.

- Canoe a safe distance away from wildlife

### Check your equipment

Use the checklist below to make sure you have everything you need.

#### Checklist:

- 1 Boat
- 2 Paddle
- 3 Bailer/sponge
- 4 Buoyancy Aid
- 5 Small First Aid kit
- 6 Penknife
- 7 Mobile telephone (in a waterproof bag)
- 8 Fresh drinking water
- 9 Sun cream, hat and sunglasses
- 10 Light waterproof/jacket
- 11 Footwear



## Itchen

### Centre details

Woodmill Outdoor Centre  
Southampton  
SO18 2JR  
023 8091 5746



**ALWAYS be certain to let others know where you're going and when you're expected to return.**

## INSPIRING canoeing



## Other canoe trails



For more information on other canoe trails go to our website:  
[www.canoe-england.org.uk](http://www.canoe-england.org.uk)

## Downloads



Go online and download the routes:  
[www.sportshampshireiow.co.uk](http://www.sportshampshireiow.co.uk)

Contact:  
[info@sportshampshireiow.co.uk](mailto:info@sportshampshireiow.co.uk)  
0845 603 5638