

UNION WHARF MARKET HARBOROUGH

Union Wharf
Canal Basin
Leicester Road
Market Harborough
LE16 7BJ

The marina at Union Wharf has been redeveloped by British Waterways over the last two years. The marina is located at the northern end of Market Harborough - a quaint, traditional English market town that dates from 1203. You can enjoy delicious food and fine ales in the town's historic coaching inns or just potter around the market and the fine selection of family owned shops. From Union Wharf it's just two hours cruising to the 'Leicester Line' of the Grand Union Canal.

Grand Union Canal – Market Harborough Arm

Market Harborough – A market town mid way between Leicester and Northampton. Visit Welland Park, the town's museum and the old grammar school, a 17th school built on stilts. Visit nearby Rockingham Castle built by William the Conqueror. If you need to entertain the children then visit Wicksteed Park www.wicksteed.co.uk one of the biggest and best playgrounds in Europe. The town has many nice pubs, and shops. there is a antique and collectors market every Sunday in the market hall.

Eat at Covatis Italian Restaurant based at Union Wharf Marina. Open 12-14.15 & 18.00 til late.

The Old Union Canal Society gives guided walks along the canal during summer months and follow the historic town trail.

You are welcome to stayed moored up in the Marina and use the car or public transport to visit the many local attractions see website www.goleicestershire.com

The Grand Union canal boasts an extraordinary variety of wildlife, from feeding herons, and hunting owls, to water voles. A number of diverse species thrive in this tranquil and often unique environment.

CRUISING

The base at Union Wharf Marina is at the end of the Market Harborough Arm, & you need to cruise for about 2 hours (5 ½ miles) to get back on the the main Grand Union Canal.

Once you reach the main Grand Union you have a choice of cruising SOUTH OR NORTH.

GRAND UNION CANAL - Southwards

Cruise leisurely through rural and peaceful countryside to the famous Foxton Staircase Lock, about 2 hours away.

Foxton is the site of a steam powered Inclined Plane, which replaced ten locks and lifted narrow boats 75 feet. It was opened in 1900 but suffered from mechanical and structural problems. The locks were reopened in 1908 and now work beautifully. Whilst here visit the Foxton Museum and gift shop. The well stocked canalside shop offers you groceries, hardware as well as the traditional “roses and Castles” canalware, made and hand-painted on site.

Stop for a cream tea in the canal side cafe or a well deserved pint in the Foxton Locks Inn. Spend a couple of hours watching the colourful narrow boats passing through the staircase locks. British Waterways organise events based on Foxton Locks – visit www.foxtonlocks.com

Cruise from Foxton towards the Watford Locks to the South.

The Canal weaves its way through an remote but attractive stretch. There are no villages on the canal here, Husbands Bosworth being hidden by the tunnel.

Look out over the vale of Welland and to the nearby Laughton Hills. Slow down, cruise on and watch mile after mile beautiful and unspoilt countryside unfold

Enjoy an easy cruise as the canal meanders through unspoilt surroundings passing through the **Husband Bosworth Tunnel**. The Tunnel is 1166 yards long and was opened in 1813. Stop and moor for a while, stroll into Husband Bosworth for a pub, newsagents and general store. The Bell Inn here serves Real Ale & food daily.

North Kilworth is off to your right, with a couple of pubs- The White Lion & the Swan Inn.

Kilworth Wharf Marina – overnight mooring + maps & gifts

At the **Welford Junction** you can if you wish take a slight detour up the Welford Arm an overnight mooring makes a pleasant stay with the facilities of the village close by.

There is even a local on your doorstep – The Wharf Inn, with large well kept gardens by the River Avon. Some open air theatre functions during August. Nearby are the Welford & Sulby reservoirs – a public footpath from the village crosses the causeway between the two reservoirs that supply the canal & provides good views of the wildfowl on both.

The Battle of Naesy 1645 was fought 2 miles east of Welford. Here Fairfax's New Model Army routed the Royalists under King Charles I, ensuring the end of the Civil War.

Gently continue your journey passing the Hemplow Hills to your left, and open fields of grazing sheep.

2 Miles east of Bridge 31 is Stanford Hall, a William & Mary brick mansion built in the late 17th Century. On display also here is a replica on an experimental flying machine built in 1898. Teas, shop & craft centre. Open pm Easter -Sept.

The next stretch of the canal wanders southwards in a series of loops through wonderful rural scenery with not much signs of habitation.

Yelvertoft is a delightful village to stop for a while and there are moorings between bridges 19 and 20. The local is the Knightly Arms which serves real ales & home cooked food. You can stock up on supplies here as there is a stores, off licence & butcher.

Before you pass through the Crick Tunnel, you can moor up at bridge 12 & visit Edwards of Crick, a restaurant & coffee house offering a wide ranging menu. Stroll into the village of **Crick**, home of one of Britain's largest annual boat show held each year in May and have a pint and a meal at one of the local pubs. There is an intriguing second hand shop here open Wed Fri & Sat that is worth a visit (14.00-18.00)

Crick Tunnel is 1528 yards long, & has no tow path so if you wish to walk it you will have to go over the top.

Meet the lock-keepers at the **Watford Locks** and they will cheerfully help you on your way through their complex set of locks. Watford Locks raise the canal to its summit level of 412 feet. Four of these locks form a staircase, with a 'one up one down' procedure.

The new Inn is Canalside at Buckby Top lock & has moorings.

The small village of **Watford** is not to be confused with the large town of Watford in Hertfordshire. Moor up at Bridge number 6 for a true taste of the Orient at the Thai Garden, Restaurant in Station Road.

Once through the Watford Locks continue towards the Norton Junction where we meet the Oxford Canal.

(You soon will find that the M1 motorway swings away from you, but if you want 24 hr provisions you can moor up by Bridge 6 which is right beside The Watford Gap motorway services.)

At **Norton Junction** you can then go down the Grand Union towards London, or we recommend that you head west towards Braunston.

From Norton Junction to Braunston the canal runs westward through hills and wooded country, then into a wooded cutting which leads to Braunston Tunnel.

Off to the north on your right you will pass the small village of **Welton** on a hill. At Bridge 6 ¾ mile from the Canal you can find a 400 yr old pub – The White Horse Inn.

Braunston Tunnel was opened in 1796 & is 2042 yards long.

Long rows of moored craft flank the canal, but there is usually plenty of places to moor, as it is worth strolling into Braunston as there are a fine selection of old buildings here. The British Waterways office in the Stop House, was originally the Toll office between the Oxford and the Grand Union canal. It is worth stocking up on supplies here, as if you are with us for a week then it will be time to think about returning home at this point. Remember you may have seen the views before but it will look a lot different on the way back.

GRAND UNION CANAL - northwards

Cruising north will take you towards **Leicester** and you can visit some of the pretty towns and villages on the way. The canal section just before Leicester is very rural, surrounded by pleasant, typical English countryside.

If it is getting late & you want to moor up either choose a stretch of canalside, or head for Debdale Wharf Marina near bridge 65, although there will be a charge here for overnight mooring.

Soon you will pass through Saddington Tunnel which is 880 yards long, lookout for the bats which naturalists enthuse about. The Tunnel was built crooked in 1797.

Just a mile or so away is the village of **Saddington**, the award winning pub - Queens Head in the main street has superb views over Saddington reservoir, and serves a wide range of food.

Visit Saddington reservoir built to keep the canal well watered now a wildlife haven

After the tunnel you will see the small town of **Fleckney**, about 10 mins walk from Bridge 73. There is a takeaway, stores & a bakery, chemist & off licence here. The Old Crown west of Bridge 73 serves food.

The first locks you reach are the Knibworth Locks, in fact there are 5 locks to negotiate along this stretch.

Visit the Wistow Rural Centre www.wistow.com moor up at either bridge 78 or 80 for access. Call into the tea rooms for a traditional English tea, a light snack or a 3 course lunch – children's menus also available. Then stroll around the model village and the garden centre.

Wistan Le Dale model village- take the footpath south from Ivy Bridge (78) to the church and visit this acclaimed Model Village. Open daily exc Tues, with cafe.

The tunnel, bridges and locks which begin the descent into Leicester provide plenty of Canal interest.

Brocks Hill Country Park & Environment Centre is a 2 ½ mile walk north along a footpath from Clifton Bridge (85) & then via A5199 & B582, but it is well worth the effort as it make a very worthwhile day out. It is a unique environment centre built to demonstrate wind & solar power. Set in 67 acres of parkland wil a cafe. Entrance is free.

The navigation follows the north westerly course of the River Sence, until you reach Kilby Bridge (87) where indications of the City of Leicester begin. there is a good pub here.- The Navigation Inn a friendly pub serving real ales & food.

About ½ mile north of Kilby Bridge is the award winning **Wigston Framework Knitters museum**. open every Sunday.

The navigation from **Blaby** into Leicester runs through a linear Country park & mostly parallels the off road cycleway along an old railway track.

Aylestone off to the right still retains the feel of a country village with narrow streets and pretty brick cottages. There are tearooms here besides the lock.

The gas museum www.gasmuseum.co.uk is situated in a Victorian gatehouse in one of the city's first gasworks.

East of Packhorse Bridge 105 (fork left up Sanvey lane, then left) is the Black Horse. The Union Inn is east of Freestone bridge 106.

The canal follows the River Sence to its junction with the Soar, sometimes they share the same bed, and because of this flooding can occur after heavy rainfall.

Watch out for signs and for the enormous weir just above Freemans meadow lock where the Canal & the River Soar meet.

The Canal enters **Leicester** along a pleasant cutting, a variety of buildings line the canal banks and a series of ornamental bridges lead straight into the town centre by

the West bridge, making this a lovely route into Leicester considering it is a large City.

There are secure moorings at Castle Gardens (on the right past Bridge 2). The city centre is remarkably compact with everything surprisingly close to these moorings.

Places to see:

Belgrave House & Gardens,- 1709 Queen Anne House www.leicestermuseums.ac.uk

Abbey Pumping Station- 1891 with Victorian steam powered beams engines that used to pump the towns sewerage. Also unique public health exhibition & managers house circa World War 2. Moorings here.

Castle Gardens & Motte (where you moor) The Motte or raised mound dates from the 11th C.

Cathedral- Guildhall Lane, dating from 14th & 15th Centuries & restored in 19 C.

Eco House- Environmently friendly show house Tel 0116 285 5489. Buses from High Street.

NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE- close to Belgrave Lock 44.

www.spacecentre.co.uk . A great day out for the whole family is at The National Space Centre. View the space age building as you approach from you narrowboat. The opportunity to explore many facets od space travel, to meet the furthest reaches of our universe face to face & to interact with both science fact & science fiction. Open Tues -Sun all year & Mon pm -school hols.

St Mary de castro- Founded in 1107 with excellent examples of Norman glass, stone & wood carving.

Theatres

De Montfort Hall- Prime venue for touring Opera & Ballet companies & Orchestras & Soloists

Haymarket Theatre- Venue for hit shows bound for the West End.
www.lhtheatre.co.uk.

Phoenix Arts Centre – Cinema & live performances of contemporary dance, mime, jazz & folk.

Restaurants

Golden Mile- an area centred on Belgrave Rd., to the north of the city, where the focus lies on the superb range of Asian cultural delights & cuisine.

In a large city such as Leicester, there is a wide range of pubs & restaurants , these are near the canal:

The Hat & Beaver- close to the Shires shopping centre.

The Northbridge Tavern- by North Lock.

The Mulberry Tree , Birstall, riverside gastro pub.

Markets

Market Place – the Food hall selling fresh meat , poultry, dairy produce & fish from all over the world. Tues – Sat.

The retail market with over 300 covered stalls is open also.

Museums

Jewry Wall Museum- Collection of the count's archaeology up to the Middle Ages, overlooking the Jewry Wall, which dates from 2nd C & is thought to be part of Roman Baths. Two Roman Mosaic pavements can be seen in situ.

New walk Museum & Art gallery- www.Leicestermuseums.ac.uk you will discover the mighty dinosaurs as you walk in their footprints, be on the lookout for the 'Barrow Kipper' and the Rutland dinosaur.

Newarke Houses Museum- The social history of the area from 1500 to the present day, inc the history of hosiery, costume & lace industries.

Royal Infirmary Museum- history from 1771.
Wygston's House Museum of Costume.

Shopping

Shires Shopping Centre- All the usual big name stores under one high, glass-arched roof plus cafes, pizzeria, etc.

St Martins Square & Loseby Lane- speciality shopping centre in the heart of the City, Food, fashion, wine & flowers amongst the street entertainers.

If you want quiet moorings to the north of the city cruise up to Birstall, tie up near the lock & walk up beside the White Horse. This is a useful place to stop for supplies.

The Canal leaves the river, and Leicester behind, and heads north through an area of gravel workings. By Bridge 19 is the Hope & Anchor with good moorings.

Continue your journey towards the Trent Junction the junction with the Trent and Mersey Canal. For the last twenty miles of the route you'll be travelling along the River Soar, which is a tributary of the Trent, where you can enjoy some very pleasant countryside views.

The River Soar rejoins the canal by Cossington Lock .

There are a few pubs here & in the pretty village of **Cossington** , - By Bridge 21 is Cossington Mill, offeried a varied menu, The Royal Oak in Cossington -all food is freshly prepared, The Free Trade Inn, ½ mile up the lane from Sileby Mill boatyard.

Onwards towards **Mountsorrel** which is only a few yards from the canal and is a useful place for supplies. The lock is is very much a waterways show-place, & the extensive moorings and lockside pub, make it a very busy one.(The Waterside Inn by Lock 50).

Leaving Mountsorrel Lock the navigation first passes under a red brick railway bridge, dated 1860.

There is a pub at Barrow Mills basin- The Navigation, with a copper topped bar from old pennies & half-pennies.

Near Barrow Deep Lock there are a couple of pubs- The Soar bridge Inn & The Riverside.

Before the canal rejoins the river its level is changed by a very deep lock. Beyond, there follows a superb wooded stretch for nearly a mile, terminated by Pillings Flodd Lock,

The canal circles **Loughborough** to a T Junction. This marks the end of the Leicester navigation & the start of the Loughborough Navigation which completes the last 9 miles to the River Trent.

Loughborough is a busy industrial town, with shops etc & there is a bric a brac market held every Friday.

The Bell Foundry Museum is worth a visit, south of Bridge 38. www.taylorbells.co.uk

The Great Central railway south of Bridge 36 is 8 miles of preserved main line taking you back to the days of express steam haulage. Open every weekend & weekdays June-August. www.gcrailway.co.uk

The Great Central railway has been voted no 12 in a list of the 50 great railway journeys of the world.

Near Loughborough Wharf there is a carvery (Lynroys) & a pub (The Albion Inn 1/4 mile north)

On a weeks stay you will not get much further than this, so you can turn around at the Wharf & head back to Market Harborough.

Union Wharf - Choose a route

	Market Harborough	Market	
WEST	Arm of Grand Union Canal	Harborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historic town trail• Charles I head quarters for the Battle of Neasby• Quaint coaching inns• Market Harborough Museum• Kelmarsh Hall (by bus/taxi)• Lamport Hall (by bus/taxi)• Cottesbrooke Hall (by bus/taxi)• Theme park at Wicksteed (by bus/taxi)

	Foxton Locks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foxton Canal Museum • Remains of famous Inclined Plane • <i>Foxton Locks Inn</i> Excellent pub & restaurant • Historic Village Train
NORTH	Grand Union Canal	
	Saddington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Queens Head</i> Award winning pub, well worth the walk up the hill
	Fleckney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasty fish and chips shop
	Leicester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Space Centre • Charming castle gardens
	Trent Junction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Soar section (to the junction with Trent & Mersey Canal)
	Weedon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take away food
	Stoke Bruerne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The longest canal tunnel in UK (nearly 2 miles!) • Canal museum

South Grand Union Canal

Norton
Junction

- Junction with North Oxford Canal

Braunston

- Pretty church
- Fish and Chips restaurant
- *Admiral Nelson* pub and restaurants
- *Mill House* pub and restaurants
- Supermarket

