

A vibrant, high-angle photograph of a group of people sitting at an outdoor table by a canal. In the foreground, a man's profile is visible on the left, looking towards the center. A woman with blonde hair, wearing a colorful floral top, is laughing joyfully. To her right, another woman in a green top is smiling. The table is set with white dishes, a glass of water, and a basket of fresh produce. In the background, a canal flows through a residential area with colorful buildings and lush green trees under a bright sky.

YOUR LOCAL CANAL

It's the  
**great**  
outdoors

YOUR LOCAL CANAL

# It's a wildlife documentary

A canal is like a nature reserve, several metres wide and many miles long. You might see kingfishers, water voles, dragonflies, bats, or herons. They've all been seen on or by canals.

Who knows, on your local canal you could even be an otter spotter!



A man and a woman are jogging along a canal in an urban setting. The man is in the foreground, wearing a bright yellow tank top and black shorts, running towards the camera. The woman is in the background, wearing a red tank top, also running. The canal is on the left, and there are brick buildings and greenery on the right. The sky is blue with some clouds.

YOUR LOCAL CANAL

# It's an open-air gym

Leave the monthly fees, machines and MTV behind and get fit for free. Your local canal is your chance to get out of the gym, onto the towpath and remind yourself that getting fit is about fun, fresh air and freedom.

YOUR LOCAL CANAL

# It's a relaxation class

Water is good for you. You only have to sit or stroll beside a canal and you can feel yourself growing calmer, letting go of stress, and generally enjoying life more. Try life in the slow lane by your local canal.





YOUR LOCAL CANAL

# It's commuter heaven

Want to enjoy getting to work? Then try taking the towpath to the office. Cutting through the heart of the city, the canal's a quiet, traffic-free route that will set you up for the day.

## Your local canal: it's yours to enjoy every day

A canal is not just a length of water. It's your escape route to another hidden world, and the best thing about it is it's right next to the noisy, busy world you're in now. All you have to do is step off the pavement, nip down a quiet pathway, or find some steps by a bridge, and you'll soon be in a completely different place. A place for a pleasant stroll or cycle, for wildlife spotting, al fresco dining and so much more.

This guide is full of useful ideas for exploring and making the most of your own local canal, as well as telling you about the things you'll see on and alongside it.



All you have to do is step off the pavement, nip down a quiet pathway, or find some steps by a bridge and you'll soon feel like you are in a completely different place.

## Ditch the pavement, try the towpath

Whether you're walking to work, to school, alone, or with your dog, there's something about walking by the canal that's more relaxing than walking anywhere else.

It's peaceful, there's always plenty to see – from wildlife to narrowboats – and if you stick to the towpath you can't get lost! As well as your daily walking routes, [www.waterscape.com/walking](http://www.waterscape.com/walking) has a great selection of walks for those that fancy a longer breath of fresh air or some gentle exercise.



### [www.wow4water.net/kids](http://www.wow4water.net/kids)

WOW stands for 'Wild Over Waterways'. The wow4water website is an educational resource, full of fun activities for children, as well as downloadable maps and trails for local canals. These help children learn more about the history and wildlife of canals and rivers, and about water safety too.

## Things to do

You can think of Birmingham's canals as a nature reserve in the centre of the city. The combination of water, greenery and relative peace and quiet makes the canals and their banks a haven for wildlife – though you may have to be up and about early in the morning if you want to spot it.

Look out for house sparrows, blue tits, great tits, blackbirds, pied wagtails, grey wagtails, black redstarts and kingfishers.

### Stepping out

With so many canals winding their way through Birmingham, you can follow plenty of walking routes and hardly ever retrace your steps. Having plenty to see and do – from narrowboat spotting to feeding the ducks – the canals are a great place for family walks. A central Birmingham trail for children can be found at [www.wow4water.net](http://www.wow4water.net)

### Where to cycle

Canals make a good starting point for a quick cycle getaway out of the city, although some central areas are a little bit busy for cycling along the towpath. For more information on cycle routes in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton visit [www.waterscape.com/cycling](http://www.waterscape.com/cycling)

### Access for all

Birmingham's central canals offer more access for disabled visitors than canals in more rural areas. However, canals, towpaths and bridges are historic structures, and by their nature may be unsuitable for disabled access.

The British Waterways Visitor Information Centre at Cambrian Wharf is fully accessible to disabled visitors. There are also wheelchair accessible moorings at Gas Street and Tindal Bridge.



## Canal events 2008

### Tours through the subterranean world beneath Dudley

Throughout May, June, July, August

### Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

Half-term activities 24 May – 1 June

### 'More canals than Venice' walks, Birmingham

14 & 21 June, 5, 19, 26 July, 2 & 9 August

### Bratch Gala weekend

14 & 15 June

### Brownhills 5th annual canal festival

24 June

### Dragonboat races, Birmingham

28 June

### Celebrating 150 years of Victorian engineering, Netherton

2 & 3 July, 2 & 3 August

### Rosie's walk & festival, Aldridge

13 July

### IWA National Black Country Festival, Pendeford

23 to 25 August

### Heritage working boats open weekend, Hatton Locks

24 & 25 August

### Flow festival, Stourport

12 & 13 July

Full details of events taking place on or by local canals can be found in the 2008 West Midlands Canalside Events leaflet downloadable from [www.waterscape.com/westmidlandsevents](http://www.waterscape.com/westmidlandsevents) or by emailing [enquiries.westmidlands@britishwaterways.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.westmidlands@britishwaterways.co.uk)

## West Midlands canals

You'll find something to look at, something to interest you or something fun to do along almost every mile of the canals at the heart of England. We've chosen three great locations to give you an idea of the enormous variety the canals offer, from the vibrant urban to the quietly rural.

## Central Birmingham

Once the lifeblood of an industrial age, the canals of Birmingham are now both a haven of tranquility and a focal point for cosmopolitan life.

## Just off the towpath

### Brindleyplace

Ideal for a visit in all weathers, Brindleyplace lies just off the New Main Line Canal and only a short walk from the Worcester & Birmingham Canal. This is where you will find the National Sealife Centre and the Ikon Gallery, as well as cafés, bars and restaurants.

★ 1

III 2

★ 3

### The Mailbox

The Worcester & Birmingham Canal is an easy way to reach the Bullring's 140 shops, or The Mailbox – which includes Harvey Nichols amongst its retail attractions.

★ 4

### Jewellery Quarter

Leave the canal at Lock 11 of the Farmers Bridge flight, Ludgate Hill, and you're only a short walk from the diamonds and pearls of the famous Jewellery Quarter.

### Gas Street Basin

Named because it was the first place in Birmingham to be lit by gaslights, Gas Street Basin was a busy canal terminal for the loading and unloading of coal, glass and chocolate crumb. It lies mostly on the New

Main Line Canal – built by Thomas Telford to cut seven miles off the journey from Birmingham to Wolverhampton. The Basin is still bustling, but now as the heart of the city's modern regeneration.



## Take to the water

There are a number of trip boats in central Birmingham:

III 5

### Away2dine

Worcester Bar Basin, Gas Street, Birmingham B1 2JU Tel: 0845 644 5244

III 6

### Sherborne Wharf Heritage Narrowboats

Sherborne Wharf, Sherborne Street, Birmingham B16 8DE Tel: 0121 455 6163



## Where to eat & drink

III 1

### Handmade Burger Company

The Water's Edge, Brindleyplace B1 2JB Tel: 0121 665 6542

III 2

### Floating Coffee Company

Narrowboat George The Water's Edge, Brindleyplace B1 2JU Tel: 0121 633 0050

III 3

### Canalside Café

Canalside Cottage 35 Worcester Bar, Gas Street Tel: 0121 248 7979

III 4

### Jimmy Spice's Buffetworks

Regency Wharf Tel: 0121 643 2111

III 5

### James Brindley

12 Bridge Street Tel: 0121 644 5971

III 6

### Pitcher & Piano

The Water's Edge Brindleyplace Tel: 0121 633 4171

III 7

### Slug & Lettuce

The Water's Edge, Brindleyplace 66 Broad Street B1 2HL Tel: 0121 633 3049

III 8

### The Locks

The Water's Edge, Brindleyplace Tel: 0121 633 3049

III 9

### The Malt House

75 King Edwards Road, Brindleyplace Tel: 0121 633 4171

More waterside pubs and restaurants can be found at [www.waterscape.com/pubs](http://www.waterscape.com/pubs)

When you visit the canal make use of these great voucher offers

**1 free child place** with each full paying adult



## National Sealife Centre

Tel: 0871 716 2612

**Terms & Conditions** This voucher is valid for one free child admission when accompanied by a full paying adult. This voucher is valid until 31/12/08. Voucher valid at Sealife Centre Birmingham only. This offer is not valid in conjunction with any other offer, promotion, fast track entry, tickets purchased on-line, pre-paid tickets or voucher. This voucher has no cash value, is non refundable and non exchangeable. Photocopies are not accepted. This voucher is not for re-sale. This voucher is not valid for entry at Chessington World of Adventure. SEA LIFE/Sanctuaries reserves the right to alter exhibits without prior notice. SEA LIFE/Sanctuaries reserve the right to refuse entry without explanation. (BRITISHW08)



Voucher valid until 31.12.08

## Fradley Junction

This is where the Trent & Mersey and Coventry Canals meet. Its picturesque location, lively atmosphere, and ongoing programme of events for families make it a favourite place to visit all year round.

## Key canal sites

### Fradley Junction

Fradley Junction is the meeting point of the Trent & Mersey and Coventry Canals. Its picturesque location, nature reserve, canalside café, gift shop and information centre, make it perfect for walks, children's activities and events. A children's wildlife detective pack is available from the visitor centre. Fradley Junction, Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, DE13 7DN. Signposted off A38. Tel 01827 252 000

III 10

### Where to eat & drink

#### Canalside Café and British Waterways Visitor Centre

For light refreshments, cakes, drinks and the famous Staffordshire oatcake. Location as left. Tel: 01827 252 247

III 11

#### Swan Inn

Fradley Junction, Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent Staffordshire DE13 7DN Tel: 01283 790 330

## A walk on the wild side

Fradley Pool is an award-winning nature reserve. It is also in the British Waterways' Top Ten places to spot wildlife, so you're bound to see something interesting. Just keep your eyes open! The reserve has a bird hide, pond dipping platforms by the pool and tree sculptures.

### Stepping out

There are four leisurely circular walks around Fradley Junction, taking in towpaths and public footpaths through fields, with some sections on roads. For details please visit [www.waterscape.com/fradleywalks](http://www.waterscape.com/fradleywalks)

### Where to cycle

National Cycle Route 54 – from Stourport to Dudley and on to Matlock – passes close by Fradley Junction. For details please visit [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

### Access for all

The trail around Fradley Pool Nature Reserve, including the pond dipping platforms, is fully wheelchair-accessible. (Wheelchair loan is available.) There are ample disabled parking spaces.



## Hatton Locks

Originally built to link the industrialised Midlands with London, the canal from Warwick to Birmingham features a steep series of 21 locks at Hatton, carrying it out of the Avon Valley, fondly known as the stairway to heaven by the boating community.

## A walk on the wild side

The interpretive Nature Trail around Hatton Locks features six wildlife markers, positioned at specific locations, to help you spot the wide variety of wildlife to be found in the area.

### Stepping out

There are three circular walks around Hatton Locks, which take in towpaths, public footpaths through fields, and some roads. You can follow the routes from the Hatton Circular Walks leaflet (available from the café or [www.waterscape.com](http://www.waterscape.com)), or combine walks to create your own route.

### Where to fish

Course fishing is available at nearby Blythe Waters 10 miles from Hatton Locks for further details contact enquiries.westmidlands@britishwaterways.co.uk

### Access for all

The café is accessible for wheelchairs. Many interpretive displays are tactile, to help visually impaired visitors, and promotional literature is available in text-only format, downloadable via [www.waterscape.com](http://www.waterscape.com)



## Where to eat & drink

III 12

### The Waterman Canalside Pub & Restaurant

Birmingham Road, Hatton Warwickshire CV35 7JJ Tel: 01926 492 427

III 13

### Hatton Locks Café

Canal Lane, Hatton, Warwickshire CV35 7JL. The café was once the stables for the horses which pulled the barges. Tel: 01926 409 432

# 10% off the total bill

at Handmade Burger Company

**handmade burger Co**

Our award-winning, family friendly restaurant is open seven days a week

**Terms & Conditions** Voucher valid until 31st August 08. Management reserve the right to refuse voucher for any reason. Photocopies of voucher will not be accepted.

Voucher valid until 31.08.08. Valid at Handmade Burger Co, Brindleyplace Birmingham.

# One free bottle of house wine

between two people at Away2dine

**Away2dine**



Birmingham's unique luxury canal cruising restaurant [www.away2dine.co.uk](http://www.away2dine.co.uk)

**Terms & Conditions** Must be over 18. One free bottle of wine with each full price dining cruise booking for two people. Photocopies of voucher will not be accepted. Voucher valid until 31st August 08. Only one voucher per visit. Management reserve the right to refuse voucher for any reason.

Voucher valid until 31.08.08



# YOUR LOCAL CANAL

## Birmingham, Fradley Junction & Hatton Locks

### Fradley Junction off M42, Junction 9



### Hatton Locks Junction 15 off M40



#### Key

- Canal
- Lock
- Bridge
- Tunnels
- Towpaths
- Information
- Railway Station
- Pub, Restaurant or Café
- Place of interest
- Museums
- Boat Trip & Hire
- Parking
- Caravan Park

Find local area Canal Maps at [www.waterscape.com](http://www.waterscape.com) just click on the interactive map

For further information please contact  
 British Waterways, Peel's Wharf, Lichfield Street, Fazeley, Tamworth B78 30Z  
 Tel: 01827 252 000 E-mail: [enquiries.westmidlands@britishwaterways.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.westmidlands@britishwaterways.co.uk)  
 British Waterways Visitor Information Centre Tel: 0121 236 4162



YOUR LOCAL CANAL

It's  
time  
well spent



*Yours to enjoy anytime*

Find your nearest canal at [waterscape.com](http://waterscape.com)