

River Arun Pulborough to Arundel Moderate to Challenging Trail

Route Summary

The Arun is one of the Sussex rivers that flows across a flat plain before entering the sea, and gives a long and fairly safe tidal stretch for paddling. The Arun was once part of the Wey and Arun Navigation, built to try and connect the Thames with the English Channel, and the former canal is currently being restored.

This is a gentle paddle on a tidal river with magnificent historical views.

Nearest Town - Arundel

O.S. Sheets - Landranger No. 197 – Chichester and South Downs

Start - Pulborough, A29 road bridge – TQ 046185

Finish – Arundel, at the pontoon bridge, immediately downstream of the first road bridge the paddler reaches – TQ 019069

Waterways Travelled – River Arun

Type of Water - This part of the Arun is tidal - open access. H.W. at Arundel is Dover plus 1 hour 20 mins. At Amberley (halfway down), H.W. is Dover plus 2 hours, 40 mins. Pulborough H.W. tide times are Dover plus 3 hours 50 mins.

The ebb tide can be very fast-flowing, the ebb lasting for 8 hours, the flood tide only 4 hours. The preferred option would be to start at Pulborough at, or just before, high tide, with the ebb taking the paddler down in two and a half to three hours, landing at Arundel before there is too much mud exposed

Distance – 13.2 miles

Licence Information – None required

Local Facilities – Plenty in both Pulborough and Arundel, the latter being a very busy tourist town in summer.

Vehicle Shuttle Required - Yes

Portages and Locks - None

Description

Heading downstream, there is quiet countryside, and two nature reserves, first Pulborough Brooks, and then Amberley Wild Brooks, both great for seeing wading birds. The bridge after two miles is Greatham Bridge, (possible landing here, parking on west bank), with the village of Coldwaltham to the right. The Wey – South Downs long distance footpath follows the river closely until Houghton, where it joins the east-west South Downs Way. The river passes under the

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railway, and then there is a possible landing at Bury, at an old ferry landing near the church, but no parking.

The halfway point is Amberley (the bridge called Houghton Bridge, after the larger village to the right). Only parking is by permission of one of the businesses here, and the bridge approaches do not offer any landing or parking, the small B2139 being very busy and dangerous.

Amberley is very obvious – a nice bridge, and a high chalk escarpment on the left side, visible for miles. Houghton has the Amberley Chalk pits museum, a relic of former industry here.

After Houghton, the well-wooded Arundel park is present all down the right bank (landing and camping not encouraged), and after South Stoke on the right, the river splits at a railway bridge, the longer arm going left via Burpham, the right taking a shorter route alongside the railway, and under Offham Bridge. After the two re-join is a possible egress at the Black Rabbit Inn on the right, on a minor road from Arundel.

The major interest after this, to the right of a large river loop, is the Arundel Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust Reserve.

Arundel with its castle and cathedral is then very obvious on the right, and the river loops into town. The formal egress point is beyond the bridge at a floating pontoon on the right bank, for which canoeists are expected to pay (by phoning up the Harbourmaster in advance), egress on to the pavement being by a low metal gate, usually locked. Alternative egress can be difficult, over stone riveting which can be muddy and slippery.

Useful Information

There are no facilities or landing on the way down, except for Amberley, which is not very welcoming unless using the waterside restaurants etc. Pulborough is a pleasant small town, and Arundel, with its castle, is a major tourist magnet, with all facilities. There is no (public) parking at Amberley, but both Pulborough and Arundel are well-provided for.

Arundel Castle and cathedral are much visited. Brighton is only a short drive away to the east, and Chichester to the west.

www.arundel.org.uk/

www.arundelcastle.org/

www.wwt.org.uk/visit-us/arundel/

Recommended Next Trail

If you have enjoyed this trail why not try out one of the many trails available.

Safety Information

Spending an afternoon canoeing can be a fun way to experience nature, get a great workout and spend time with family and friends. However, it can also be a dangerous journey, if safety guidelines are overlooked. Always follow these basic rules and comply with navigation rules- keep to the right of on-coming boats. Please be careful at points along the trail where there are sharp bends on the waterway and keep a look out at these points for oncoming traffic.

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Wear appropriate clothing

Always wear shoes. Rocks, rough terrain and river beds present serious hazards to boaters without the proper attire. Nearly 90per cent 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.

Be sure to

- Know the weather forecast before you set out canoeing.
- Familiarise yourself with the local area, it's sensitive places and protected areas.
- Leave the environment as you found it. Please read [You, Your Canoe and the environment](#)
- Take your litter home with you.
- Follow the navigation rules for the waterway you are on.
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not damage bank side vegetation when launching or landing. (No Seal Launching)
- Where possible keep to any designated paths or launching points.
- Canoe a safe distance away from wildlife.
- Check your equipment.
- Observe the navigation rules for this waterway.
- Check to see if there are any events on the waterways when you wish to travel.

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

Checklist:

1. Boat
2. Paddle
3. Buoyancy Aid
4. Bailer/sponge
5. Small First Aid Kit
6. Penknife
7. Mobile telephone (in a waterproof bag....Please note that in some areas due to the location mobile telephone reception might be nonexistent)
8. Fresh drinking water
9. Sun cream, hat and sunglasses
10. Light waterproof jacket
11. Footwear
12. Licence

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

Specific Environmental Information:

Please ensure you don't remove or damage any plants or animals from the waterway as they may be protected or harmful if transferred to other catchments.

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Canoeists and kayakers take very seriously environmental concerns and already follow existing voluntary environmental codes of conduct, including Canoe England's own guidance notes outlined in the "You your canoe and the environment" publication.

By following the simple steps below you can ensure your presence is not detrimental to the freshwater environment, minimize and avoid accidentally disturbing wildlife and their habitats.

- Find out about the area before you go, noting its sensitive places, species and breeding seasons.
- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home with you.
- When clearing litter left by others, handle it with care.
- Leave the environment as you find it
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not "seal" launch or drag boats to avoid wearing away natural banks. Float your canoe for launching, lift out when landing and carry it to and from the water.
- Do not damage bank side vegetation when launching or landing.
- Where possible keep to any designated paths or launching points.
- On rivers, avoid paddling over gravel banks in low water conditions – they may contain fish spawn.
- Constantly assess wildlife. If you see signs of disturbance move away quietly.

Be the eyes and ears on the water. Report pollution, wildlife problems, damage, incidents etc to the relevant authorities.

Canal & River Trust - Emergencies- Telephone 0800 47 999 47

RSPCA for wildlife and animals in distress – Telephone 0990 55 59 99 (24 hours)

Environment Agency - Telephone 0800 80 70 60 (24 hours)

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