NEWRY CANAL TOWPATH

This cycle and walking route from the Bann Bridge in Portadown to the Town Hall in Newry is a 20 mile trip on part of route 9 of the National Cycle Network. The route follows the towpath on the western bank of the now, non-navigable, Newry Canal.

The canal operated for more than 200 years and provided employment throughout its length and generated wealth for the many towns and villages nearby. The canal was the first summit level canal in the British Isles and has fourteen locks between Carlingford Lough and Lough Neagh, most of which can be seen on this route.

ATTRACTIONS ALONG THE ROUTE

- **Point of Whitecoat** is at the end of the canal and the confluence of the Bann and Cusher rivers. The latter is crossed by a distinctive bridge.
- **Moneypenny’s Lock** is the last lock on the canal before it joins the River Bann and is the location of a small museum.
- **Scarva Visitors’ Centre** can be accessed via a footbridge and is located beside the only port on the canal where barges once passed each other or collected and delivered their cargoes.
- **Acton Interpretative Centre** is situated on the site of a former sluice keepers cottage beside Lough Shark. The small lake was used to maintain the water level in the canal.
- **Gamble’s Bridge** was also known as the Crack Bridge due to either the crack in its wall or as a meeting point to share a bit of craic.
- **Steenson’s Bridge** is a picturesque stone bridge incorporating three arches.
- **Art Pieces** can be seen along the route including some NCN Mileposts and a series of specially commissioned pieces which reflect the former work and nature of the Newry Canal.

Additional cycling opportunities away from the towpath can be enjoyed by:

1: Continuing on route 9 from Newry, via the National Trust property at Derrymore, to Camlough and the Sleeve Gullion Courtyard Centre.

2: Cycling from Portadown, journey via the Craigavon Lakes and Oxford Island, to the Lagan Canal at Lisburn and on to Belfast or return to the towpath via Regional Route 10 through Waringstown and Bleary.

3: Travelling west from Scarva on National Route 91 towards Clare, for Armagh and Enniskillen, or swinging north towards Tandragee to meet the towpath again at Knock Bridge.

TRAVEL TO/FROM THE NEWRY CANAL TOWPATH

The excellent cross-border rail service, which connects Belfast and Dublin calls at Portadown and Newry and can accommodate up to 12 bicycles. Cyclists are encouraged to use this service to start or finish their trip to the canal. Local rail services operate from Belfast to Portadown and Ulsterbus express services run to Portadown and Newry. Bicycle carrying is limited on these services and travellers should contact the operator before setting out. Bus Eireann services connect Dundalk and Newry.

Useful Contacts

**Tourism**
- Millennium Court Arts Centre
- Tourist Information Point
  - William Street, Portadown
  - Tel No: 028 3839 4415
- Armagh Tourist Information Centre
  - 40 English Street, Armagh
  - Tel No: 028 3752 1800
- Banbridge Tourist Information Centre
  - 200 Newry Road, Banbridge
  - Tel No: 028 4062 3222
- Newry Tourist Information Centre
  - Tel No: 028 3026 8877
- Scarva Visitor Centre (Seasonal)
  - Tel No: 028 3883 2163
- Lough Neagh Discovery Centre
  - Tel No: 028 3832 2205

**Public Transport**
- Translink
  - Tel No: 028 9066 6630
  - www.translink.co.uk
- Irish Rail
  - Tel No: 00353 1 836 6222
  - www.irishrail.ie
- Bus Eireann Dublin
  - Tel No: 00353 1 836 6111
  - www.buseireann.ie

**Cycling and Walking**
- Sustrans
  - Tel No: 0845 113 0065
  - www.sustrans.org.uk
- Outdoor Recreation NI
  - Tel No: 028 9030 3930
  - www.outdoorrecreationni.com

Any comments or for more information on the route email: info@sustrans.org.uk

Other contacts for cycling in Northern Ireland
- Cycle Northern Ireland: www.cycleni.com
- NI Tourist Board: www.discovernorthernireland.com

www.sustrans.org.uk
The Newry Canal towpath is a shared use path and can be busy at times in places. Please give way to pedestrians and be prepared to dismount if necessary.

The canal towpath offers all users of the route the opportunity to observe the varied flora and fauna and to discover the historical and archaeological heritage of the area.

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The Newry Canal Towpath

- Newry Canal Towpath
- Link routes (some may be on-road)
- National Route, Regional Route
- Access point
- Rail station, bus station
- NCN Milepost
- Sculpture

Scale 1:100,000

Code of conduct for shared use paths

Cyclists please don't expect to cycle at high speeds
- be prepared to slow down or stop if necessary
- be careful at junctions, bends and entrances
- give way to walkers and wheelchair users
- leaving plenty of room
- remember that many people cannot hear or see well don't assume that they can see or hear you
- fit a bell and use it - don't surprise people

Motorcycles and quads are not permitted on traffic-free paths.