

## 8. Slough Arm

3 miles (short route 2¼ miles)

Explore the historic Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal and walk along riverside paths on the Bucks/London border.

**Easy Access** \*\*\* No stiles. Good paths. Some short slopes. Part of the path beside the Colne Brook can be muddy in winter.

**Refreshments** \*\*\*\* Pubs and shops in West Drayton and Yiewsley near to the station

**Public Transport** \*\*\*\* West Drayton station and bus stops at point 1.

[1] From West Drayton Station turn right at the end of Station Approach onto the High Street and cross the bridge over the canal. Turn right straight away down Horton Road and then right again onto the canal towpath. Follow the towpath until you reach the next bridge (number 191) go up the steps and turn left onto Trout Road.

[2] Cross the bridge over the Frays River, then turn left onto the bridleway signposted Colne Valley Trail. The path forks after a little way. Bear left and cross the bridge to follow a disused road.

[3] After ½ mile turn right onto the sign posted public footpath just before the gates to the water works and follow the path beside the Colne Brook. When you reach the Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal turn right and continue along the towpath.

To take the short cut turn right at the coal duty post (A stone obelisk which indicated the boundary where coal bound for the capital was liable for duty before 1890) beside bridge No. 1 and follow the path back to the station.

Packet Boat Marina can be accessed via a wooden bridge (number 0) where ice creams and cold drinks can be bought during the marina office hours. Next to the Marina on Packet Boat Lane is the Waters Edge Pub where lunches and dinners are served. There is also a car park at the marina that can be used during office opening times.

[4] When the Slough Arm meets the main Grand Union Canal cross the bridge and turn right onto the towpath and continue to the second bridge (number 192). After passing under the bridge turn left and left again onto the High Street to continue back to West Drayton Station.

The Slough Arm passes over three aqueducts as the canal was raised above the landscape to avoid building locks and placate angry mill owners who did not want the canal stealing water from the rivers that powered their mills. If the aqueducts are approached quietly, there is a good chance of spotting a kingfisher flying off down the river.

The Slough Canal was one of the last canals to be built and managed to compete with the railway until the 1950's. The canal transported building materials from the brick fields into London and brought back London's waste which was used to backfill the brick pits.

[Right] Little Britain Lake

[Bottom right] Slough Arm

[Below] Bridge over the Slough Arm

