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# UK Canal Boating

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Escape with a canal boating holiday!

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## Congleton and the Macclesfield Canal from Anderton

Cruise this route from : Anderton

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Cruising Days : 8.00 to 0.00

Cruising Time : 36.50

Total Distance : 58.00

Number of Locks : 72

Number of Tunnels : 0

Number of Aqueducts : 0

This cruise takes you south along the Trent & Mersey Canal to Kidsgrove and then up the Macclesfield Canal to Congleton.

You are on the edge of the Peak District , with distant views of the Pennines, and you cruise past evidence of the Rock salt mining that has gone on since Roman times , many old salt quarries have been made into fine wildlife meadows.

The cruise includes the 26 lock flight called Heartbreak hill but is situated in beautiful Cheshire countryside.

## Cruising Notes

Day 1

From Anderton marina you head south along the Trent & Mersey canal.

Away on your left you will see Marbury Country park which has woodlands carpeted with bluebells in the springtime, or relax under the shade of the lime avenues. Wander along the mere with splendid views over the water to the church at Great Budworth, or explore the arboretum and community orchard. Children will enjoy the play area, close to the picnic area.

There are attractive short stay moorings here if you have had a long trip and want to moor up somewhere local for the night. Or head for Marston Bridge 193 which is 45 minutes from Anderton where there is a pub and late

opening stores.

Alternatively cruise for a couple of hours to Northwich, the Old Broken Cross Pub is by Bridge 184 canalside and has moorings. There is a chemist, grocer & other shops ½ mile past the pub towards Northwich.

Cruising time to here just under 2 hours

Day 2

As the canal heads towards Middlewich you move out into fine open country on a beautiful stretch of canal, often overhung by trees following the delightful valley of the River Dane.

There are pleasant moorings with picnic tables & BBQ just before Bridge 176. (just over 3 hours to here from Anderton marina)

The canalside area of Middlewich is a haven of peace below the busy streets. The town has been extracting salt since Roman times, and there is an interesting town trail north of Bridge 172. There are various pubs canalside along this stretch.

As you descend into Middlewich there are 3 locks to be negotiated before you reach a canal junction, and Kings Lock just after the junction.

Ignore the Middlewich branch canal to your right, and continue south down the Trent & Mersey Canal past several salt works, which shows this areas industrial heritage. The Rock salt mining that has gone on since Roman times has resulted in severe local subsidence, and the canal has had to be banked up in some stretches, which makes it much deeper than normal. There is a chinese takeaway west of bridge 166.

Occasional locks mark a quiet and unspoilt area, the town of Sandbach is away to the left, as the canal reaches the village of Wheelock. This busy little village has a stores and fish & chip shop., and 3 pubs, 2 near bridge 154, and one Canalside- the Cheshire Cheese- with moorings outside.

Sandbach is 1 ½ miles north of Wheelock, and is an old market town that has retained its charm. In its old cobbled market place stand 2 superb Saxon crosses, there are 7 pubs to choose from around here.

After Wheelock the first of 26 locks called Heartbreak Hill will have to be negotiated before you get to Kidsgrove and the junction with the Macclesfield Canal,. First pass the village of Hassall Green, the village has a stores and a canal shop within the canal Centre, which also houses a cafe beside the canal, there is lockside seating.

Moor up here for the night is is 8.5 hours to here.

Day 3

You then negotiate 5 locks and pass the village of Rode Heath to your left, there is a canalside pub here and it has a useful shopping area.

Rode Heath Rose was once the site of a salt works but has now been landscaped and restored as a wildflower meadow.

Continuing on you get to Kisingrove and the Macclesfield Canal passes overhead on the Poole Aqueduct , you will be travelling over this shortly, but to get to it you travel up to Hardings Wood Junction and then take the

right turn to the Macclesfield canal.

This brings you parallel with the Trent & Mersey in the same direction you have just travelled from, until you reach the Poole aqueduct which takes you over the T & M along the Macclesfield Canal to the north, a very roundabout way of turning left!!

The villages of Hall Green & Scholar Green are reached to your right. Scholar Green is a small village, again with some pubs – Travellers Rest and Rising Sun, both welcoming children and have gardens.

Apart from one lock at Hall Green, the route is lock free all the way to Congleton,

The canal enters glorious open countryside, to the east Mop Cow crowns the ridge of tall hills that run parallel to the canal for many miles.

At the summit of Mop Cow, men once quarried stone to make into querns, used since the Iron Age for milling corn; this trade ended during the Victorian period. The village also has a long history of coal mining. A 65 ft rock feature called the Old Man O'Mow sits in one of the quarry areas and is believed to be the site of an ancient cairn. The most dominant feature is Mow Cop Castle which is a folly of a ruined castle at the summit of the hill, built in 1754. Both Mow Cop and Old Man O'Mow are under the management of the National Trust and sit on the walking route of the Cheshire Gritstone Trail. The hill is nearly 1100 ft above sea level and gives magnificent views across the Cheshire plain, beyond Stoke and into Wales. Walk east from Bridge 85, there are various footpaths.

The ever present range of hills is a reminder that the Pennine Chain are just beyond.

Beautifully elegant roving bridges 76 and 77 are known as snake bridges as the S shaped bridge changed the towpath from one side to the other, and in the days of horse drawn barges they didn't have to unhitch the horse.

About a mile north west of bridges 79 and 80 is the pretty village of Astbury and close by is Glebe Farm. In 2010 Glebe Farm Shop opened its doors selling home grown and local produce. The coffee shop followed shortly afterwards. The farm continues to expand and recent additions include a Butchers, children's petting area and playground, retail units and tractor rides.

Congleton is a busy market town. Moor up and have a look around if you wish. There are shops, restaurants, walks, cycle routes, and Mow Cop Castle to see. Some of the local pubs are Wharf Inn and Moss Inn, both with gardens, and children and welcome.

The National Trust's Little Moreton Hall, Cheshire, is an iconic Tudor manor house, moat and manicured knot garden.

You can walk to Astbury Mere Country park- a dog & family-friendly area with a network of trails & fishing lake on a former sand-quarry site.

Turn your boat at the winding hole just south of Porters farm Bridge 72, there is a useful parade of shops just to the south east of Bridge 75. Moor up at the visitor moorings or wherever you can.

It is 8 hours to here.

Day 4 Day 5 day 6 day 7

4 full days to get back and only just over 18 hours cruising, so just under 5 hours per day will be sufficient, so

plenty of time to explore on the way back!

## Useful Links

The information above is provided in good faith to assist you with planning your canal boat holiday. Information accuracy cannot be guaranteed, however, if you do see something that needs updating, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

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