The Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail

The Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail stretches from Winchester to Southampton, passing through the historic town of Bishopstoke. It follows the course of the River Itchen, which has been navigable for trade since the 12th century.

**Walking the Trail**

The Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail stretches from Winchester to Southampton. The navigation was originally used for trade and fishing until it was abandoned around 1870. Today, it provides a pleasant natural environment for walkers to enjoy.

The route is well-marked and the navigation itself is a beautiful feature of the landscape.

**History**

In the late 16th century, Henry VIII authorized the building of the Itchen Navigation to transport various kinds of heavy or bulky freight from the ships docked in Southampton to Winchester, which was the capital of the Archbishopric.

The navigation continued to be used until the early 19th century, when it was abandoned. The last lock was closed in 1869, and the navigation was declared redundant.

**Modern Era**

In the 1970s, a group of volunteers formed to restore and conserve the Navigation. In 1997, a society was formed to make some use of the industrial relic. In 1996, the Itchen Navigation was restored and improved for most of its distance, and a Nature Reserve was established.

The Itchen Navigation is now a Nature Reserve, and the waterway is very much in harmony with its surroundings, offering a pleasant feature of the landscape.

**Restoration and Repair**

Since the 1970s, the navigation has been restored and improved, and several sections have been adapted for use as a waterway. Today, the waterway is well-maintained and is a popular destination for walkers and cyclists.

**Places to visit**

- **St. Cross**
  - Famous Cathedral and City Mill.
  - A short walk to the east.

- **Famous Mill**
  - 33 arches and is the Church Meadows.
  - Iconic Cathedral and Church.

- **Twyford**
  - Small Suburban Station has an hourly train service, and the main river. These can be used either as a part of your walk, or to start or finish your day.

- **Winchester**
  - City of Winchester, an important historic city.
  - The Black Boy Bridge Inn.
  - A short walk to the west.

- **Bishopstoke and Fair Oak**
  - Stagecoach E2 Stagecoach E2.
  - Stagecoach E2 Stagecoach E2.

**Bus times**

- **For current bus times, please consult the operator's own website.**

- **Train times and operators**
  - See back of this leaflet.

**Train Information**

For information about train times and fares, please ask a member of the staff at your local train station or visit the following website:

- **Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership**

**Cross Country Trains**

For information about train fares and times, please ask a member of the staff at your local train station or visit the following website:

- **Cross Country Trains**

**Bus operators**

- **Blue Star**
  - 023 8342 3342
  - bluestar.co.uk

- **Bluestar 1**
  - 023 8342 3342
  - bluestar.co.uk

**Cross Country Trains**

- 0344 736 9123 or visit crosscountrytrains.co.uk

**Train times and operators**

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**Walks**

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Getting to the Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail by train and bus.

From Winchester:
Exit from Platform 2. Walk down St. John Hill, and then the central subway to reach City Road which is directly ahead of you. Walk along City Road and at the end (before the traffic lights) turn right into Jewry Street. Walk along Jewry Street, passing the Discovery Centre on your right. At the end of Jewry Street, cross the road at the pedestrian crossing at the top of St. George’s Street, after passing the Fire Station. From here you can take the pedestrian crossing to reach the Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail on the left. Turn left at the sign to follow the 'Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail', 'Mills and Meadows' and 'Itchen Way' way-markers. This gate is the northernmost entrance to the Itchen Navigation footpath.

From Shawford:
Exit from Platform 1 or 2. Turn right into Wessex Lane, and follow the road past the University Halls of Residence until you come to the junction with Woodmill Lane. Turn left, and follow the road until it narrows to become a single width as it crosses the bridge over the Itchen Navigation. At this point you can take the footpath on the left and follow the path across a field, and head up to meet Wharf Hill. You will see the Black Boy pub on the right, then follow the path through the open fields which lead you to Shawford Down. At the end of Shawford Down, cross the road to the river bridge with white railings.

From Eastleigh:
Exit from Platform 2. Turn right into Wilsley Road, and follow the road past the University Halls of Residence until you come to the junction with Wilmers Lane. Turn right, and follow the road until you come to the junction with Woodmill Lane. Turn left, and follow the road until it narrows to become a single width as it crosses the bridge over the Itchen Navigation. At this point you can take the footpath on the left and follow the path across a field, and head up to meet Wharf Hill. You will see the Black Boy pub on the right, then follow the path through the open fields which lead you to Shawford Down. At the end of Shawford Down, cross the road to the river bridge with white railings.

A useful cycling leaflet is available to download from the South Downs National Park website: southdowns.nationalpark.gov.uk. Photography and leaflet design by the Image Team (023) 8023 5606.