



# SHROPSHIRE CANAL TRAILS



## Newport Canal

A 2½ mile (4km) trail by foot or bike, passing features on a section of the Newport Branch of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal. This branch of the canal was first opened in 1835 and went to Wappenshall Junction north of Telford. When it closed in 1944, however, much of the canal between just west of Newport and Wappenshall Junction was infilled so there is little to see today.



*Tony Clayton*

The trail starts at the car park on Water Lane, Newport but you can join or leave it at various points en route. More information and photographs for the sites can be found on the website below. Most of the route is on good footpaths that are accessible by wheelchair. Only one section (the optional return route from Polly's Lock to Tickethouse Bridge) might be difficult for disabled persons but the main route can be used back to avoid this. The trail should take about 2 hours to complete on foot and 3 hours by bike.

<http://shropshirehistory.com/canals/sites.htm>

**To get to the Water Lane car park, head for the roundabout at the junction of the A41 and A518. Take the exit heading west into Newport and straight across a mini-roundabout. At the roundabout on Newport High Street, turn right. Turn right opposite a petrol station onto Water lane and, just after the road bends right, turn left into the car park.**

#### 1 NEWPORT BASIN

The wide stretch of water next to the car park was the canal basin where boats loaded and unloaded goods. The black building used to be a warehouse. Another warehouse that used to be sited here was moved to Blists Hill Museum. There would also have been facilities for repairing boats.

#### 2 NEWPORT TOWN LOCK No.20

All of the locks and bridges were numbered in sequence from Norbury Junction, where the canal joined the Shropshire Union Canal. The locks on this branch had traditional mitre gates and there is a photograph on the front of this leaflet of this lock as it was in the early 1900s.

#### 3 NEWPORT BRIDGE No.14

The canal bed has been partly infilled under the bridge so you may have to duck if you are tall. The canal here has also been culverted into a narrow channel. On the far side of the bridge, you can see a narrow roving bridge that crossed the canal next to the road bridge. This was so designed that a horse towing a boat could cross over where the towpath changed sides. The narrow culvert continues for a short distance before the canal open out again to its full width.

#### 4 TICKETHOUSE LOCK No.21

This is another lock and the original iron footbridge still exists. Just before the lock on the left is a canal cottage built to a design by Thomas Telford. This has a projecting bay window so that the occupants could see both ways along the canal. From the name of the lock, this must have been a place where boats had to pay a toll to travel a certain length of the canal. Boats could carry up to 20 tons of cargo and were charged a toll on each ton per mile travelled. There was another toll office at Wappenshall Junction so the boats would buy a "ticket" to travel that distance. Boats would have their cargo checked to ensure that it complied with the ticket for the journey so far.

#### 5 WINDING HOLE

On the other side you will see a wider stretch of water that was called a Winding hole. The word is pronounced with a short "i" to rhyme with "tinned" rather than "fined". It was where long boats could turn around, since the canal was too narrow otherwise. It is believed that the word derives from the practice of using the prevailing wind to assist with the turn. Winding holes were constructed at regular intervals to the side of the canal.

#### 6 POLLY'S LOCK No.22

Another lock that has been almost completely infilled. It remains a mystery who Polly was! The section of canal containing water ends here as the canal beyond has been infilled for agricultural use.

**Retrace your route to Newport Basin. An alternative way back to Tickethouse Bridge can be taken down the other side of the canal but note that this is uneven and muddy in places. At Newport Basin, follow the canal towpath in the other direction. There are many water lilies growing in this section and they make a good display when flowering.**

#### 7 FISHER'S LOCK No.19

Another lock similar to the others. For some reason, it was also known as Haycock's Lock in the past.

#### 8 SUMMERHOUSE BRIDGE No.13

A stone bridge that is protected with a Grade II Listing.

#### 9 STRINE BROOK AQUEDUCT

You will have seen the Strine Brook to one side along most of the way. Here it passed under the canal which crosses it on a short aqueduct.

#### 10 MERETOWN LOCK No.18

This lock has been infilled and forms the end of the 1½ mile (2½ km) stretch containing water. A little further on, the A41 cuts across the canal but beyond that it can be followed to Norbury Junction.

**That is the end of the Trail so retrace your steps to the car park.**