

## Route 6 Birmingham City Centre Canal Circular

**Distance:** 5 or 8 miles (40-50 or 60-80 minutes) depending on the route chosen.

**Start:** Fazeley St at the canal bridge near Andover St in Birmingham city centre B5 5RD. OSGR SP079869.

**Route Summary:** A circular canal ride with a choice of routes. The shorter route is entirely on canal towpaths and the longer ride includes 1.5 miles of relatively quiet city centre streets. There are several steep sections so be ready to use your brakes and gears.






**Refreshments:** The most convenient spot to get refreshments is at Brindley Place on the longer route.

**Parking:** There is free on-street parking at Fazeley St but this may be busy on weekdays. Alternatively, there is pay parking next to Moor Street station.

**Alternative Start Points:** Gas St Basin and other canal access points along the route.

**Access by Train:**  The start point is 0.25 miles from Birmingham Moor St station.

### Key to Map

<b>A B</b>	Start and route reference point
<b>1, 2</b>	Mileage from start point
<b>PH/CF</b>	Public House/Café
<b>SH</b>	Shop selling drinks, sweets etc
<b>V</b>	Visitor Centre
<b>+</b>	Notable church
<b>P</b>	Start points with free parking
<b>P</b>	Start points with pay parking
	Off-road path – good surface
	Off-road path – rough/very rough surface
	Canal towpath
	Quiet road
	Busier road

Abbreviations used in the route description:  
L left, R right, SO straight on.

**Push Bikes**, the Birmingham Cycling Campaign, aims to influence local authorities, employers, health service providers, public companies (rail, road, water) in providing improved journey facilities (including bike storage and parking) for cyclists.

We are eager for more members - come and join us! Visit [www.pushbikes.org.uk](http://www.pushbikes.org.uk), phone 0121 632 6909, or write to 54 Allison St, Birmingham B5 5TH, for a membership form.

### Birmingham Urban Explorer Cycle

**Routes** are a great way to see your city in a new way – on two wheels! This is one of 9 self-guided cycle rides using quiet paths and roads to link places of interest, providing the ideal healthy and environmentally-friendly half-day out. Cycle them alone or with family and friends. The emphasis is on exploration so don't expect to cycle fast and please give way to pedestrians on shared paths. Please push your bike on any paths where cycling is prohibited, including pavements alongside roads unless signs indicate that cycling is allowed.

**Keeping Safe** Urban Explorer cycle routes use a combination of off-road paths and quiet roads. Short sections of the route may need to be on busier roads but very busy roads are avoided. Please ensure your bike is roadworthy and that you are comfortable riding on roads of this type. If in doubt consider having some cycle training which will improve your on-road confidence. Details of CTC approved trainers are available at [www.ctc.org.uk](http://www.ctc.org.uk).

**Want to cycle the route with others? Push Bikes** organises occasional rides along the routes in these leaflets. To join in, simply turn up at the ride start point with a roadworthy bike. For details of ride dates go to: [www.pushbikes.org.uk](http://www.pushbikes.org.uk).

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# Birmingham Urban Explorer Cycle Route

# 6



Birmingham City Centre Canal  
Circular via Salford Junction, Aston  
Junction and Gas Street Basin (6 or 8  
miles)

*Explore your City with this self-guided cycle ride*



## Route 6 City Centre Canals Circular via the Birmingham & Warwick Junction, Birmingham & Fazeley and the Digbeth Branch Canals

**Distance:** 5 or 8 miles (40-50 or 60-80 minutes) depending on the route chosen.

**Start:** Fazeley St at the canal bridge near Andover St in Birmingham city centre B5 5RD. OSGR SP079869.

### The Route

**A** From Fazeley St go down the ramp and turn R onto the towpath of the **Digbeth Branch Canal** (canal on L). At the canal junction go over the bridge and turn L to pass under the same bridge and onto the towpath of the **Warwick & Birmingham Canal** (canal on R). Cross over the **River Rea**, passing a historic canal warehouse on the R. Pass under the railway viaduct which was built by the **Great Western Railway** in 1848 and never completed.

**B** At the canal junction take the downward ramp slowly, ready to turn sharp L under the iron bridge onto the towpath of the **Birmingham & Warwick Junction Canal**. Follow the towpath, passing under a number of bridges including railway bridges for the **Midland Railway** and the earlier 1838 **London & Birmingham Railway**. Later the canal passes between the **River Rea** and the modern **Heartlands Parkway**. Ahead is the entertainment centre at **Star City** and the **M6 motorway**.

**C** Under the M6 motorway, cross over the **River Tame** and under the iron bridge. Turn L at the junction with the **Birmingham & Fazeley Canal**. Do not go over the concrete bridge but bear L onto the towpath of the **Birmingham & Fazeley Canal**, heading towards the City Centre (canal on R). Follow the towpath for almost 2 miles. Look out for what is left of the many side-canals giving access to numerous wharfs – in most cases only the bridge remains, making the towpath something of a ‘roller coaster’. There are also a number of locks taking the canal up to Birmingham. The canal also passes under the later **Grand Junction Railway**, Britain’s first main line going to Liverpool and Manchester.

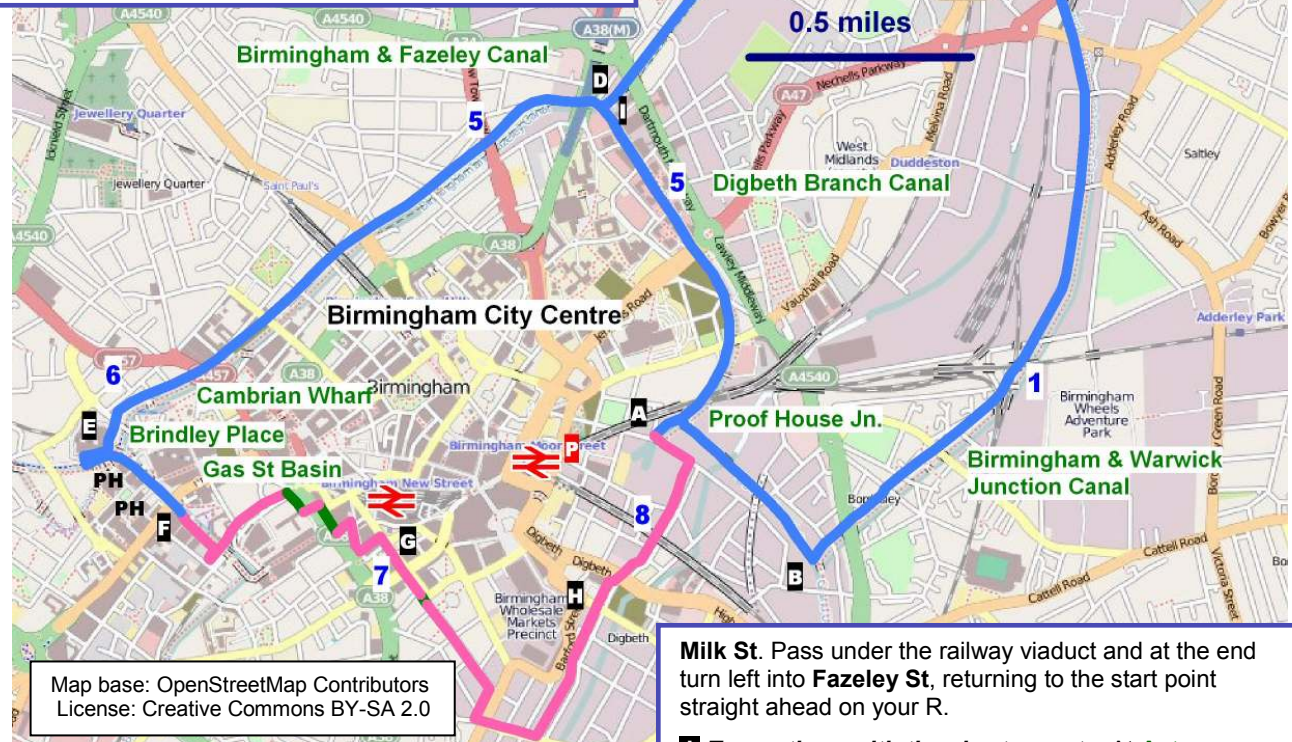
**D** At **Aston Junction** there is a choice of routes. **For the shorter route go to point 1.** **To continue with the longer route:** go over one of the two bridges on your right to continue SO (canal on L). The canal threads between city centre buildings, passing under the massive railway viaduct, eventually emerging at **Cambrian Wharf** near the **National Indoor Arena**. Just beyond is **Old Turn Junction**.

**E** Pass the junction and go over the second iron bridge dated ‘1827 Horsley Ironworks’. Turn L and follow the towpath around the **Sea Life Centre**, passing **Brindley Place**. Go under **Broad St** and into **Gas St Basin**.

**F** Leave the canal by the ramp, R. Turn L into **Gas St** and at the end

of the road turn L under the canal. The route now follows **National Cycle Network Route 5 (NCN5)**. Near the end of this road (**Holliday St**) use the central cycle lane to turn R onto a cycle path. Go down the hill to the junction and turn L, passing under the road and immediately R, then onto the footway (a sign permitting cycles is ahead). Turn next L following NCN5 signing to the **Chinese Quarter**. Turn second R into pedestrianised **John Bright St**. Go SO at the end following the road L under the **Alexandra Theatre** into **Station St**. At the end turn R into **Hill St** using the gap marked for cyclists to enter the contra-flow cycle lane. Continue to the traffic signals.

**G** Press the button and wait for the cycle crossing phase. Cross into **Hurst St**. Continue along the contra-flow cycle lane, through the pedestrian zone outside the **Hippodrome**. Continue SO down **Hurst St**. At the second set of traffic signals use the cycle crossing to turn R into **Sherlock St**. Turn next L into **MacDonald St** (leaving NCN5) and third L



into **Rea St South**. At the next signals go SO.

**H** Just before the next signals cross, with care, onto the opposite footway and use the pedestrian signals to cross the busy road (**High St Deritend**). Go straight ahead into

**Milk St**. Pass under the railway viaduct and at the end turn left into **Fazeley St**, returning to the start point straight ahead on your R.

**I** **To continue with the shorter route:** At **Aston Junction** turn L onto the towpath of the **Digbeth Branch Canal** (canal on R). Follow this for 1 mile, passing through the **Ashted and Curzon St tunnels**. At **Proof House Junction** go SO across the bridge to return to the start point.