

City Sights

2.6km (2.9 Miles)

Flat

Any bike

Paved - cycle trails & quiet roads

0m 100m 200m



Key

Start/Finish

Coffee Shop

Play Park

Rowing Club

Sailing Club

Road - Take Care

Railway Line

Route: On Road

Route: Traffic Free



POINTS OF INTEREST

01 Walk across the reservoir?

Perhaps not somewhere you would instantly think of to show off your world leading tightrope skills, but in 1873 Charles Blondin made the crossing across the reservoir. The rope is said to have been stretched from the gate house across the reservoir to the other side; nowhere near as scary as his 1859 journey across Niagara Falls.

02 Roach pool

Originally a very small fishing pond in the middle of the Lord of the manor's hunting grounds, Roach Pool was considerably enlarged by Thomas Telford between 1824 and 1829 to provide water to the city's busy canal system, and at this point it became known as Edgbaston Reservoir.

03 Canal water

Entering from under the ground is the feeder stream for the reservoir, built as part of Thomas Telford's expansion works. The water coming from the tunnel is fed from a holding pool, just under junction 2 of the M5 motorway. The feeder stream is gravity fed and is approximately 5 kilometres long.



Scan to follow the route digitally with OS Maps

- 05 This time follow the path ahead, taking the right fork up to the railings.
- 06 Head left down Selwyn Road, watching out for cars, and back into the reservoir by turning left onto Gillot Road and then right down the steps.
- 07 Upon joining the reservoir path, turn left and continue all the way round until you reach the starting point.



04 A house by Chance?

Now replaced by the bandstand (which itself is over 100 years old), the large Summerfield House was built by the Chance family, who were entrepreneurs who were brought in by Nailsee Glassworks to help them be more successful. They turned the company around and decided to set up their own glassworks. Chance Glassworks in Smethwick in 1824. The Chance Glassworks were world-renowned, but their most successful line of work was manufacturing the lenses for lighthouses around the world.

05 Harborne railway

The Harborne railway opened in 1874, with three stations: Icknield Street, Rotton Park Road, and Harborne. Originally built through countryside, the surrounding areas quickly developed into housing that kept this commuter line busy with, in its hey day, up to thirty trains each way. The railway closed in 1963 due to a lack of use and later found new life as a walkway.



ROUTE DIRECTIONS

- 01 From the café, descend through the old car park toward the reservoir and begin your journey clockwise by going left.
- 02 Follow the path around the reservoir until, just after The Red Shed on the left, there is a bridge over the feeder stream.
- 03 Head up the small steps here to the road, turn right onto Gillot Road and then take the next left into the park.
- 04 Upon entering the park, head straight across the middle to the other side and follow the perimeter path around to the right clockwise. Enjoy time in the park, following the path around until you return to where you first entered.



06 Tolkien's Two Towers

Eagle-eyed people may be able to spot two towers located on the hill above the reservoir, which are said to have influenced J.R.R. Tolkien's creation of 'Minas Morgul' and 'Minas Tirith', the Two Towers of Gondor in his Lord of the Rings stories.

07 Views for miles

The 330-metre-long dam wall, which holds back 300 million gallons of water, provides a great view towards the northeast of the city, and from where you see some of Birmingham's famous landmarks. Below the dam you will notice some older buildings: the single storey building was built to stable horses used in the construction of the canal network and the two storey building was the manager's office and accommodation.

08 Buddhist Vihara

The Dhammatalaka Peace Pagoda (Birmingham Buddhist Vihara) was opened in June 1998. The temple's oriental-style sacred tower or stupa, symbolises peace, compassion and the noble qualities of the Buddha. The pagoda fulfils three purposes: a place for meditation, a place to learn about Buddhism, and a place to find peace and tranquillity.

Can you spot these landmarks on your travels?

