

Spaghetti Union

10.9km (6.8 Miles)

Flat

Mountain Bike/
Hybrid Bike

Paved - canal tow
path & quiet roads



Key

	Start/Finish		Road - Take Care
	Coffee Shop		Route: On Road
	Play Park		Route: Traffic Free
	Cinema / Entertainment		Railway Line
	Museum		Train Station
			National Cycle Network

0m 250m 500m 750m 1000m



POINTS OF INTEREST

- 01 Brown sauce**
Birmingham was known as 'the city of 1000 trades' during the industrial revolution, and the Aston area was one of the centres of manufacturing in Birmingham. One of its love-it-or-hate-it exports was HP sauce. The original recipe was developed by a grocer from Nottingham who, it's thought, named the sauce after the Houses of Parliament in 1895. However, Edwin Samson Moore bought the recipe for £150 in 1903 and launched HP sauce to global fame.
- 02 Bikes**
By 1900, Birmingham was home to nearly 350 cycle or tricycle manufacturers; one of three large cities involved in the manufacture of bicycles, alongside Nottingham and Coventry. Near here, one of the largest manufacturers of bicycles and components in the country, Hercules, was founded in 1910. Its production exceeded six million bikes by the end of the 1930's, many of which were exported across the world. The company went on until the 1950's when there was a large slump in bicycle sales due to the increasing popularity of motor vehicles.
- 03 Spaghettini Junction**
The Spaghettini Junction, or to give it's official name, the Gravelly Hill Interchange, began construction in 1968 and



- 06** The towpath brings you up to the road. Turn right and then immediately right again onto Andover Street, following this as it curves around to the left under the railway
- 07** Follow Banbury Street and then turn right onto New Canal Street. Head straight ahead into Eastside Park and then turn right and make your way through the park until you reach Cardigan Street.
- 08** Turn left here up the slight incline and take the first right onto Gopsal Street. Bear right onto Belmont Row crossing the canal, then turn onto the towpath.
- 09** With the canal to your left, pass two locks and go through a narrow tunnel. Continue along the canal until you approach the junction. Turn right here, past a lock and head down the canal for a further three locks.
- 10** At the fourth lock, before the red brick bridge, exit the canal, turn right and then re-trace your route through Windsor Street, Bullock Street and Proctor Street back to the leisure centre.
- took four years to complete. The junction covers thirty acres and serves eighteen routes split across five different levels.
- Within the interchange's thirty-acre plot are six roads, two rivers, three canals, a fishing lake (formerly the reservoir which provided Birmingham's drinking water), several bridges and a railway line. Inevitably much was lost in the late 1960s, including a factory, a pub, over 150 houses and the Dwarf Holes - a network of sandstone caves which were amongst the areas earliest recorded examples of settlement, and still functioned as air raid shelters during the Second World War.
- 04 Star City**
Opened by George Clooney and Mark Wahlberg in 2000 to coincide with the launch of their latest movie, 'The Perfect Storm', Star City is home to a cinema, bowling alley, football pitches, escape rooms, laser quest and many food outlets. The complex is built on the site of the demolished Nechells A & B coal-fired power stations; these would have provided power to homes and businesses across Birmingham.
- 05 River Rea**
The river Rea has been crucial to the development of Birmingham as a source of drinking water for those that visited the market city throughout its growth. Known as Beorningaham when an Anglo-Saxon tribe, led by Beorma, crossed the river, Birmingham has grown to become the



Scan to follow the route digitally with OS Maps



- 01** Turn right out of the leisure centre car park, then at the first junction turn right and then immediately right again onto Proctor Street. Take the first left onto Bullock Street and then right onto Windsor Street
- 02** At the T-junction turn right onto Richard Street until just before the red brick bridge where you will need to take the paved path to your left onto the canal.
- 03** Here, turn right onto the towpath, keeping the canal on your left for approximately 1.5 miles until you reach Spaghettini Junction. Stay on the same level underneath the roads, follow the canal around to the right and around the corner and then enter onto the narrower Birmingham and Warwick Junction canal.
- 04** Follow this canal for approximately 2.5 miles, turning right at the T-junction towards the city centre.
- 05** At the next T-junction, initially turn right but immediately turn right again up the slope and across the bridge, crossing over where you've just come.



ROUTE DIRECTIONS

- city it is today. Along the way it's been known by a few different names: Brummagem, Bromichan, Bremicham, Brum, amongst others.
- However, evidence of the first visitors have been found in Saltley, just on the city centre outskirts, which are dated to 500,000 years ago: much older than Beorma's tribe at a mere 1900 years ago.
- 06 Peaky Blinders**
Now made famous by the 2013 TV series, the Peaky Blinders were a notorious Birmingham gang who roamed the city's streets between 1880 and 1910. These smartly dressed criminals were involved in robbery, violence, racketeering, bookmaking and gambling across the city. The gang got their name from their trademark peaked flat caps and from always being dressed like a 'Blinder' - a local slang term for someone who is smartly dressed. However, their rein in Birmingham was short lived: just as they had defeated the 'Sloggers' gang to gain dominance in Birmingham, the 'Birmingham Boys' gang then took over.
- 07 Custard**
Another of Birmingham's greatest exports was instant custard powder, created by Alfred Bird in 1837 as an egg free alternative for his wife who was allergic to eggs. The Bird's Custard Factory and surrounding area has now been converted into a creative hub, home to many independent shops, cafes and restaurants, and which also offers many places for entertainment.



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TEA & TV

DIABETH LOCK

- 08 Tea & TV**
Originally sold as a cure for indigestion, Typhoo tea was launched in 1903 by grocer John Sumner. The original three requirements for the branding were: the name had to be distinctive and trip off the tongue and, of course, it had to be protected by registration. The chosen name Typhoo came from the Mandarin Chinese word for 'doctor' and was a nod to the original purpose. Typhoo has gone on to be a global brand that started in Birmingham with its own canal basin, the site of which is now to be the home of BBC Midlands in a new state-of-the-art building.
- 09 How to get water uphill**
Between this junction and the city there is a hill, the last hurdle for boats to travel into the city centre. A total of 13 locks in the Farmers Bridge Flight allow boats to go uphill into (or downhill out of) the city. The locks work by the boat entering the lock gate and either adding water to go uphill or taking water out to go downhill. This is quite time consuming and in the late 1800s the locks operated 24-hours-a-day to cope with the demand. This didn't mean there wasn't a queue at the bottom or top lock though!

