

Ride: Riverside Park near Pontardawe

Start/Finish: Sail Bridge

Distance: 20 miles.

Terrain: Flat

Map: *Swansea A-Z.*

This ride takes you up the new section of National Cycle Route 43 south of the M4. There were diversions past this section for some two years while a new embankment to alleviate flooding was constructed. It was opened in April 2014.

From the Sail Bridge follow NCR 43 up the east side of the Tawe to Morfa and then across the river past the Liberty Stadium. The path here has recently been improved. Don't cross the Mannesman Bridge but continue north to the new Beaufort Bridge. The shared use path alongside Beaufort Road has also been upgraded and is no longer bumpy like it used to be. The renovated section of NCR 43 starts on the east side of the Beaufort Bridge and takes you to the motorway. The route from the Liberty Stadium to the M4 is now (2014) a model of what a cycle route should be.

Continue under the motorway, under the A4067 and along the new (2012) path which crosses the Afon Tawe Bridge (pictured) reaching the canal at Clydach. It then crosses the B4603. Take care here as the marked crossing is below par. (Hopefully it will be improved in 2015.) Next, the route passes through the "Depot". There are plans to make this into a garden.

Continue north-east along the canal to Pontardawe. Here you enter a park at the end of a cul-de-sac where the route bears right and then left along the river. Instead of crossing the river for the continuation of NCR 43 keep straight on for 400m to Riverside Park. With its sculptures and the Riverside Centre this makes a fitting destination.

Return the way you came as far as the M4 and then, to make a pleasant alternative to the ride out, follow off-road paths which bypass NCR 43 to the east re-joining it at the Mannesman Bridge. A summary of this route is as follows.

Bear left off NCR 43 immediately south of the M4 and cross Mill Stream Lane. Follow cycle paths south across the A48 and Fendrod Way, along the east side of Fendrod Lake and across Valley Way to cross the Tawe on the Mannesman Bridge. From there it's back to the Sail Bridge the way you came.



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