



RAIL Trails



Olton to Shirley

Image by Tim Ellis

This eight mile trail from Olton follows the towpath along the **Grand Union Canal** to Tyseley, before turning on to the **River Cole** and taking you through the four mile long **Shire Country Park** – Tolkein country – and on into Shirley. You can detour at a couple of points to finish at Hall Green or Yardley Wood stations.

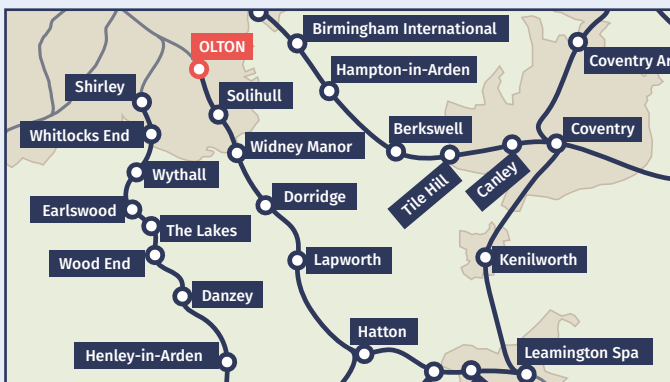
As you leave Olton station you'll see the Saxon King on Horse stainless steel sculpture. If you need a bite to eat or a drink, there are a number of cafés, takeaways, a Balti House and pubs close to the trail, however a good place to start is the **Happy Heart Café**, just a four minute walk along the trail. At Acocks Green there's the **Journey's End** serving British pub classics, and close to Hall Green Station is the **Hungry Hobbit café**.

But whatever you do, save yourself for a stone baked Neapolitan Pizza in the courtyard of the **Sarehole Mill Museum**, a Grade II listed, 250 year old mill, amidst the rural surroundings that inspired Tolkein himself...

Further Information:



Visit www.visitsolihull.co.uk for more information on what to see in and around the area.



Olton is on the Solihull line running between Birmingham Snow Hill & Stratford-upon-Avon. Trains run several times an hour to Birmingham and Dorridge via Solihull, with one hourly train continuing all the way to Stratford. Some peak services also run to Warwick and Leamington. Birmingham bound trains continue onto Worcester, Kidderminster or Stourbridge.

Limited facilities are available at this station.

Want More?

This is just one of a range of 36 self-guided walks from railway stations in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.



Discover the Heart of England by rail at: www.heartcommunityrail.org.uk/railtrails



Design by: www.blackspiraldesign.co.uk



Image by Colour Rail

RAIL Trails



Discover The Heart of England by Rail



Olton

Image by John James / Alamy

3.5 Hours 8 Miles Easy

Start: **Olton** Finish: **Shirley**

A longer meander along the banks of the Grand Union Canal and the River Cole, through the heart of Tolkein Country!

www.heartcommunityrail.org.uk/railtrails



Trail Highlights...



Image by Happy Heart Café

A. Happy Heart Café

A healthy start to your day! Swing by the Healthy Heart for ethical, organic, free-range, fair-trade, additive-free and local produce where possible. Not a bit of greasy, fried, processed, stodge in sight!

www.happyheartcafe.co.uk

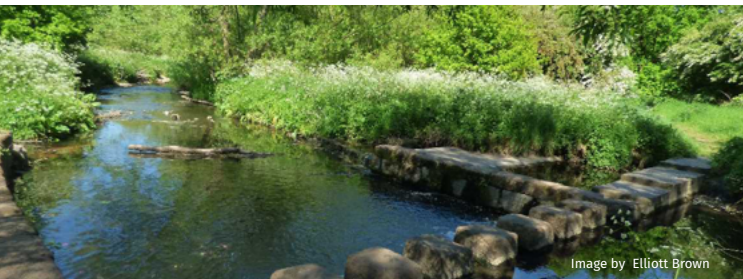


Image by Elliott Brown

B. The Shire Country Park

Taking its name from Tolkien's The Shire. This local nature reserve follows the River Cole Valley for four miles as a tranquil corridor of wetlands, grasslands, woodland and heath. Keep your eyes peeled for wildlife, including kingfishers!

www.birmingham.gov.uk



Image by Elliott Brown

C. The Hungry Hobbit

If you feel in need of a second breakfast, its a short detour "there and back again" to reach the Hungry Hobbit. Sandwiches, café favourites and more breakfast than even Pippin could eat...

www.facebook.com/hungryhobbitz/



Image by Birmingham Museums

D. Sarehole Mill Museum

A grade II listed, 250 year old watermill that inspired J.R.R Tolkien's writings of Middle-earth. Today its a wonderful museum next to a wildlife-filled mill pond and home to "The Courtyard" and their amazing Neapolitan Pizza!

www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/sarehole

Did you know?



Sarehole Mill and its landscape are literally The Shire of a young **J.R.R.Tolkein's** imagination. He literally lived next door at 264 Wake Green Road as a child!

Also recommended...



Image by Visit Birmingham

E. Ackers Adventure

Still have energy after the walk? Stop by this outdoor activity centre, set over 75 acres, for a nine-hole disc golf course, floodlit skiing and snowboarding slopes, bellboating, canoeing and kayaking, archery ranges, climbing walls and more!

www.ackers-adventure.co.uk



Image by Vintage Trains

F. Vintage Trains

Experience the nostalgic sights and sounds of steam engines speeding through the glorious countryside. Sample a high quality dining experience or relax in beautifully restored carriages on routes from Tyseley and Birmingham Moor St or Snow Hill Stations.

www.vintagetrains.co.uk

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Olton to Shirley

Symbols Key

	Public Toilets		Nature Reserve
	Station		Gardens
	Pub		Church
	Information Centre		Historic Monument
	Museum		Route of trail
	Castle		Waypoint
			Point of interest

Trail Directions

1. Exit station and turn right. Pass bus stops, and at mini-roundabout turn right under railway bridge. Cross side road and canal bridge and turn right down brick-surfaced path. At bottom turn right on towpath.
2. Ahead on towpath for 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ miles. After passing under railway bridge 88E and immediately before pedestrian bridge 88F, turn right up steps and at top turn left over bridge. On opposite side, turn left through narrow gap in fence before green electricity boxes (do not go ahead through wider gap with white posts).
3. Ahead on path between trees, which descends to join River Cole on left. Where path bends right, turn left across footbridge to stay close to river. Pass weir. At green metal barriers, keep ahead on path. At signpost, bend left to cross footbridge (signposted Warwick Road). At path junction with signpost, turn right and ahead with river now on right. Through metal barriers and ahead with wooden fence on left to reach road.
4. Cross garage entrance and ahead on right-hand pavement. Before petrol station and junction, cross road to blue "Burbury Brickworks" sign. Ahead to pedestrian crossing and cross road. Cross end of cul-de-sac to another blue sign, turn right to pedestrian crossing, cross road, on opposite side turn right to corner with signpost, where turn left. Through gate in blue fence with security hut on right, and ahead on brick path through industrial estate. At end, cross road and ahead through metal barrier/wooden archway.
5. Ahead on path signposted Sarehole Mill. Follow same path for 400 yards to road. Cross road and ahead under "The Shire Country Park/Burbury Brickworks Nature Reserve" sign. Ahead on path for 500 yards, through metal barrier to left of large metal gate, and fork left on path to pavement and pedestrian crossing. Cross road and turn right to cross Sarehole Road. Ahead on pavement with wooden fence on left. Cross bridge and turn left on path through metal barrier with "The Shire Country Park/Greet Mill Meadows" sign on right.
6. Ahead to path junction with houses visible to right, continue ahead. Pass weir on left. At next path junction, keep left. Ahead through metal barrier to cross road next to ford, through barrier and ahead on path, still with river on left. At end of large grass area on right, turn left, cross footbridge and turn right on path around edge of car park with Sarehole Mill on right. Ahead to road.
7. Turn right to pedestrian crossing, cross road, turn left then turn right through gap in fence onto path (signposted The Dingles/Robin Hood Lane). Ahead on path through wooden archway to road.
8. Turn right to pedestrian crossing, cross road and turn left then turn right onto right-hand pavement of Coleside Avenue. Where pavement turns right, cross road, ahead across grass to small car park and through metal barrier onto path ahead (ignore path to right). Follow path to end and go through gap to pavement.
9. Turn left, and where pavement forks, fork left to left-hand end of metal barrier. Cross road via traffic island. On opposite side turn right, then turn left through gap in fence. Ahead across grass towards pool. Cross first path, then turn right on second path with pool on left. Path bends left around pool, with wooden fence on right. Ahead between bollards and continue on path. At end of pool, ahead between wooden posts to lane.
10. Turn half left across lane, through wooden barrier and ahead on path. Cross two footbridges. At end, through gap to left of large metal gate, cross road (ford to left), turn right on pavement, cross bridge and immediately turn left on narrow dirt path with river on left. Ahead on path. At path junction by large tree turn left to cross stream using paving slabs as stepping stones and ahead across grass to parking spaces at bend in cul-de-sac.
11. Ahead on grass and keep ahead with road on right. At end of cul-de-sac, bear right on grass towards garages, then turn left on path with wooden fence on right. Ahead on path to road.
12. Turn left to pedestrian crossing, cross road, on opposite side turn right then immediately turn left on path, again with river on left. At path junction turn left up steps to cross footbridge with green metal railings. On opposite side, down steps and bend right with path, initially with river on right. Path bends left away from river, passing bench then play area on right, then bends right passing "Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvements" noticeboard on left. Pass to left of car park barrier, ahead on pavement of car park access road, cross school access road and ahead on grass to reach pavement.
13. Turn left, passing school on left. Cross side road Cole Green, pass bus stop, cross side road Brook Close, ahead past Shirley Community Church on left to reach road junction. Turn left onto Haslucks Green Road. Cross railway bridge and turn left to Shirley station.

Want an online map?

Scan the QR code or visit explore.osmaps.com



Ready for another Trail?

Discover more at www.heartcommunityrail.org.uk/railtrails

