

The **Avon New Cut** is a tidal waterway which runs from Totterdown to the Cumberland Basin in Bristol. It was excavated between 1804 and 1809 to divert the course of the River Avon in order to create Bristol's Floating Harbour. New industries grew along the riverbanks of the New Cut and it was used by cargo and passenger boats until the late 1930s. In 2015, the Avon New Cut was officially designated as one of Bristol's Local Nature Reserves.

The **Friends of the Avon New Cut (FrANC)** is a group of local people whose objectives are to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the New Cut, particularly its history, geology, wildlife, infrastructure and the essential role that it still plays within the city of Bristol.

The map inside this leaflet describes four **Circular Walks around the Avon New Cut**. Each walk includes at least two of the eight bridges that span the New Cut from Ashton Avenue Bridge to Bath Bridge, and should take around 30 minutes to complete. Buildings of historic or educational interest are marked on the map, and the leaflet contains further information about some buildings and other landmarks. The map also includes the location of several local cafés and pubs, as well as the positions of benches from which to enjoy the abundant vegetation and wildlife.

There are eight **Interpretation Boards** along the length of the New Cut and these are marked on the map. FrANC was involved in the design of these boards, which contain further information about the local infrastructure and wildlife, including the important habitat for butterflies and moths next to the CREATE Centre at Butterfly Junction. Each of the four Circular Walks described includes at least two Interpretation Boards.

There is no specific starting point on any of these walks and they can be combined to create circular walks of longer duration. Walking the entire circuit would take approximately 1½ hours.

Enjoy!

Getting there

By Train: **Bristol Temple Meads** is the closest railway station (to Walk 4).

By Bus: **Wessex Bristol Service No. 506** runs between the CREATE Centre and Bristol Temple Meads, with stops on Cumberland Road, at the ss Great Britain, and on Commercial Road and Clarence Road (inbound only).

In addition, the **MetroBus Ashton Vale to Temple Meads** route has stops at the **CREATE Centre**, **Spike Island** (near Vauxhall Bridge) and **Wapping Wharf** (near Gaol Ferry Bridge) from 2017.

Accessibility

The walks described in this leaflet are accessible to wheelchair users, but there are steps at each end of Langton Street (Banana) Bridge on Walk 4 and Walks 1 and 2 would need to be combined due to steps onto the Chocolate Path at Vauxhall Bridge.

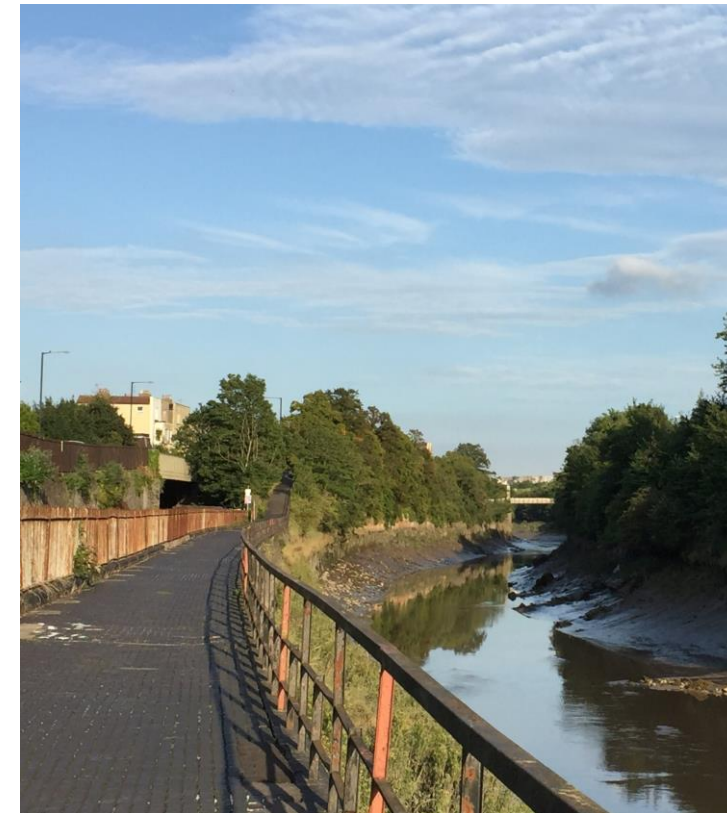


Contact FrANC

FrANC is working to improve the New Cut and its wildlife. If you would like to find out more, or to get involved, please visit our website at www.franc.org.uk or contact us via email at contact@franc.org.uk.



Circular Walks around the Avon New Cut



FrANC
Friends of the Avon New Cut

Key to Symbols:

Chocolate Path ———

Benches ■

- 1, 2 Clarence Road
- 3 Cumberland Road (top of Chocolate Path)
- 4 Coronation Road (near Vauxhall Bridge)

Historic Buildings ■

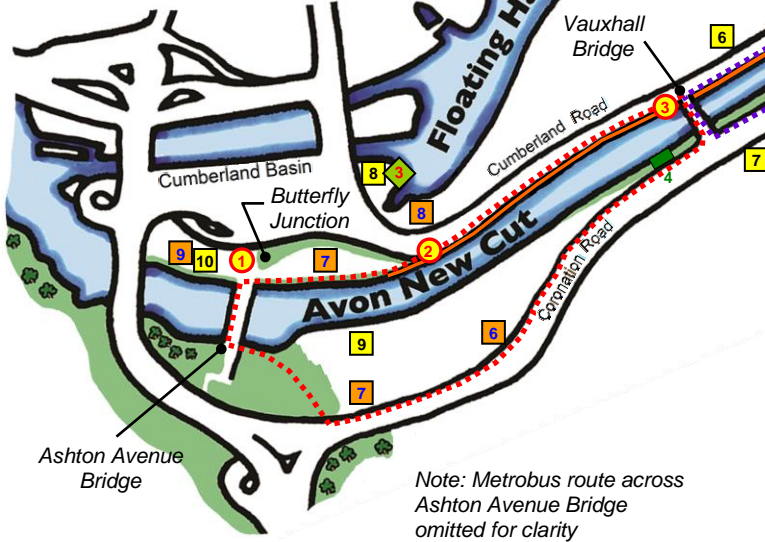
- 1 St. Mary Redcliffe Church
- 2 Zion House
- 3 St. Paul's Church
- 4 New Gaol
- 5 St. Raphael's Church
- 6 Thomas Ware & Sons (tannery)
- 7 Bonded Warehouses
- 8 Underfall Yard
- 9 CREATE Centre / Records Office

Museums / Visitor Centres ◆

- 1 M-Shed
- 2 ss Great Britain
- 3 Underfall Yard Visitor Centre

Cafés and Pubs ■

- 1 Harry's Café (Fowler's motorcycles)
- 2 The Nook
- 3 The Ostrich
- 4 The Louisiana
- 5 Gaol Ferry Steps (several cafés and bars)
- 6 Spike Island Arts Centre Café
- 7 The Avon Packet
- 8 Pickle Café, Underfall Yard (Wednesday – Sunday)
- 9 Riverside Garden Centre Café
- 10 CREATE Centre Café (Monday – Friday)



Note: Metrobus route across Ashton Avenue Bridge omitted for clarity

Walk 1: Butterfly Junction - Ashton Avenue Bridge - Coronation Road - Vauxhall Bridge - Chocolate Path - Butterfly Junction Loop

Walk duration: 35 minutes (approx.)

- The two large red brick buildings near Butterfly Junction were built in the early years of the 20th century as **bonded tobacco warehouses**. One now houses the **CREATE Centre and Ecohome** and the **Bristol Records Office**, while the other is used for storage. A third former bonded warehouse can be seen on the south bank of the Cut adjacent to **Riverside Garden Centre**, which is run as a co-operative and is the only garden centre in central Bristol.
- The **Chocolate Path** – so called because of the shape of its surface bricks – is a riverside foot and cycle path on the north bank and the best place from which to view the New Cut. Part of the **Bristol Harbour Railway** runs between this path and Cumberland Road.
- One of the industrial buildings on the south bank of the Cut is Britain's largest traditional tannery, Thomas Ware and Sons Ltd., established in 1840.

Walk 2: Vauxhall Bridge - Chocolate Path - Cumberland Road - Gaol Ferry Bridge - Coronation Road - Vauxhall Bridge Loop

Walk duration: 30 minutes (approx.)

- **Spike Island Arts Centre** on Cumberland Road was originally built as a tea packing factory for Brooke Bond in 1960.
- The two large water outfalls opposite the start of the Chocolate Path are the most recent Malago river flood relief culverts, built in the 1970s as part of Bristol's flood defences.
- The entrance to **St. Raphael's** on Cumberland Road between *Perrett's Court* and *The Quays* is all that remains of the church that was destroyed during the bombing of Bristol in 1940.
- **Zion House** on Coronation Road was originally the "Church of the Vow", a non-conformist chapel built by John Hare.

Walk 3: Gaol Ferry Bridge - Cumberland Road - Bathurst Basin - Bedminster Bridge - Coronation Road - Gaol Ferry Bridge Loop

Walk duration: 30 minutes (approx.)

- **Gaol Ferry Steps**, opened in 2016, provides a link between Gaol Ferry Bridge, one of Bristol's busiest pedestrian and cycle bridges, and the Harbourside / City Centre.
- Bristol's **New Gaol** (built in 1820) was stormed during the Bristol Riots of 1831 (see Walk 4). The Gaol closed in 1883 and was later demolished to make way for a coal yard depot. The remains of the Gaol entrance still stand and are being incorporated into a new housing development.

Walk 4: Bedminster Bridge - York Road - Bath Bridge - Clarence Road - Bedminster Bridge Loop (including Langton Street (Banana) Bridge)

Walk duration: 30 minutes (approx.)

- In October 1831, Sir Charles Wetherell, an arch opponent of a Reform Bill to improve the democracy of the country, came to Bristol to run a court session. At Hills Bridge (Bath Bridge) he was met by supporters of the bill, and stones were hurled at his carriage. Although soldiers were on hand (no police force existed at that time) they were reluctant to act because of the disaster of the Peterloo massacre in 1817. This led to the start of the Bristol Riots, during which the New Gaol was stormed (see Walk 3), the Bishop's Palace was set on fire and much of Queen Square, the home of the richest merchants, was gutted.
- The mooring posts near one of the benches on Clarence Road were used by dredger barges in 1940. The barges were filled with bomb rubble and debris which was then dumped in the River Severn. After America entered the war, the rubble was used as ballast for "liberty boats" returning to New York and became the foundation material for the new East River Drive.
- The water outfall that can be seen from Clarence Road on the opposite riverbank just upstream of the new Bedminster Bridge is the earliest flood relief culvert from the Malago river, built in the early 1800s.

