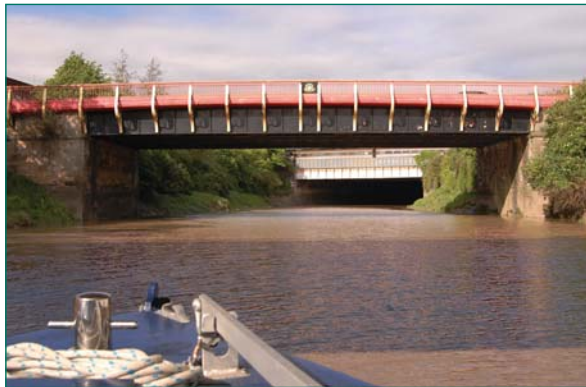


# Bath Bridge Avon New Cut



Fig tree



The two present-day bridges as seen from the Avon New Cut



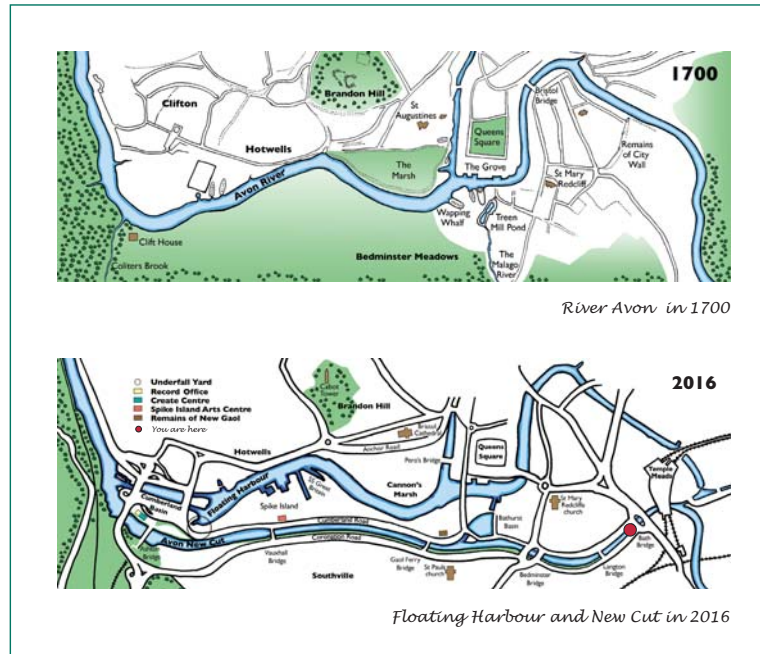
Sea aster



Otter

## Welcome to Avon New Cut

The New Cut was dug in the early 19th Century to create a tidal-free “Floating Harbour” so ships could berth safely. When the New Cut was constructed a cast iron bridge was built here, known as Hills Bridge, which was supplied by the Coalbrookdale Company, Ironbridge.



River Avon in 1700

Floating Harbour and New Cut in 2016

### Hills Bridge

Hills Bridge was an important part of the stage coach route to Bath, Wells and London. In March 1855 a steam barge delivering coke to the railway works collided with the ribs of the bridge, causing it to collapse completely. A temporary footbridge was erected by June and a road bridge before the end of 1855, which was eventually replaced by a wider one in 1909. Another bridge was built alongside to double the capacity in 1959.

By late Victorian times the area's intense industrial growth led to the development of packed slums around the New Cut, resulting in numerous cholera epidemics. A cholera burial ground was located just beyond the railway bridge to the east of the two present-day road bridges.

Vast parts of the surrounding area were destroyed in the Second World War blitz and subsequently rebuilt, including council tower blocks in the 1960s.

### Wildlife

Otters have been seen along this part of the New Cut. Vegetation indigenous to the riverbank includes sea aster, our only native michaelmas daisy, and fig trees.

**Friends of the Avon New Cut (FRANC)** is working to improve the 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](http://www.franc.org.uk), or contact us via email at [contact@franc.org.uk](mailto:contact@franc.org.uk)

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### Wildlife Fact:

Otter tracks are webbed and large (hind foot up to 60mm wide and 90mm long) with five toes and a large rear pad. Some toes and the webs may not be visible in mud.



Otter (front foot)

Otter (hind foot)