

45 Bristol Bridges by Mobility Scooter

Crossing each bridge only once

Introduction

These instructions are for use by those travelling by mobility scooter. They have been devised by Paul and Margaret Coombs, using Margaret's mobility scooter: CareCo Pinnacle X-GO. This has a range 20+ miles, a 4" ground clearance, pneumatic tyres and a top speed of 4mph. The suitability of the route for other vehicles has not been assessed but I hope that they can be used as a starting point for you to assess the suitability of the route for your particular vehicle.

These instructions are to guide you from bridge to bridge, and they begin where it seems most appropriate to start the walk — at Bristol's first bridge. They are not intended to be a guided tour of the whole city, but some items of significant interest that you pass along the way are pointed out.

Not quite 45 bridges!

As you will see, this route necessarily departs from the main walking route. However, only four bridges have been excluded. Brocks Bridge (9) and St Philips Footbridge (10) are currently closed. The Temple Meads Relief Line Bridge (11) and Langton Street (Banana) Bridge (23) are not accessible by mobility scooter.

In addition, different ways to approach and leave the Suspension Bridge have been suggested. The approach to the Suspension Bridge is made on safety grounds. The departure from the Suspension Bridge is based partly on safety grounds (Sandy Lane etc) and partly on the terrain through Leigh Woods. The riverside track is well within the capabilities of nearly all scooters however the long 16-mile "loop" down and back to the M5 bridge may be beyond the battery capabilities of many.

If you take the riverside option through Pill (para 34) please be aware that some of this path in the vicinity of Pill (exact location not yet ascertained) is flooded at high tides. Further information will be provided here in due course, but for the time being, you are advised to avoid this option within 2 hours of high tide and if flood warnings have been issued. You can check tide information and flood warnings [here](#).

[Bristol Tide Times](#)

[Government Flood Warning Service](#)

[FloodAssist](#)

LHP = Left hand side pavement
RHP = Right hand side pavement

The route begins at Castle Green. Before you start, take a look at the ruined St Peters Church. Note how (in the absence of other buildings) it gives an excellent all-round view of the environs. It is likely that the Saxons made a settlement here and thus began Bristol. Now make your way down to the southwest corner of the park, to Bridge Street.

1. Start in Castle Park, crossing **Bristol Bridge (1)** on LHP proceeding along Victoria Street to lights at Counterslip.

2. Turn left and keep on LHP over **St Phillips Bridge (2)**.

Note: Bridge 3 is crossed at end of the walk. As you cross the bridge you see Temple Bridge upstream on your right, and behind it, Valentine's Bridge.

Stay on LHP along Passage Street & Narrow Plain. Turn left taking underpass after 50m under Temple Way.

Parts of Church of Sts Philip and Jacob ("Pip n'Jay") date from around 1200 but it was very altered in the 18th and 19th centuries.

3. Cross Broad Plain. Keep to LHP along Temple Way crossing **Temple Bridge (4)**.

St Philip's bridge is downstream, and Valentine's Bridge can be seen upstream.

4. At 1st left into Temple Back East cross by Pelican Crossing turning left to go along RHP to Harratz Place and cross **Valentines Bridge (5)**. Turn right.

You will pass a pair of tall grey funnel shaped objects next to the water — this is an artwork called "The Freetank" by Roger Hiorns

and refers to the glassmaking history of this area.

5. After 100m cross over **Meads Reach Bridge (6)**.

6. Keep straight on Friary going to LHP past mini roundabout turning left at Temple Gate. Follow pavement across the Pelican Crossings at Station Approach.

It is worth a short detour into the station approach. The glass canopies of the main building station front Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt's 1870's building in reddish stonework. Brunel's original station building, in light grey stonework, is on your left, and begins at the opening with the "Passenger Shed" sign above it. Just beyond the right-hand side of the approach is the handsome Jacobean-style former headquarters of the Bristol and Exeter Railway (1852–4) designed by S C Fripp.

7. Pelican Crossing over Cattle Market Road onto **Bath Bridge East (7)**.

From the bridge, looking east, you can see Temple Meads station and the major railway bridge that carries the platforms.

8. Keep to LHP for about 1100 m until you reach "Paintworks" development. Bear left down slope continuing straight ahead for 350m to end. (No useable pavement here). Turn left down alleyway to **Sparke Evans Park Bridge (12)**. (Care needed on exit ramp.)

A short detour in the park of 100m downstream (going west) will bring you to a copse, on the east side of which is a (very dilapidated) Edwardian bandstand, with some fine decorative cast iron columns and corbels.

9. Go straight forward from exit ramp taking 3rd right by cast iron street lamp to Albert Road. Turn right, use RHP to St Phillips Causeway. Cross both carriageways by Pelican crossings, turn right over **Phillips Causeway Bridge East (13)**. Use crossings over Whitby & Bloomfield Roads to Pelican Crossing 400m beyond. Using 2 Pelican crossing go over **Phillips Causeway Bridge West (14)**.

10. Pass "Karcher" on left crossing over Albert Road via Pelicans. Turn right following pavement around edge of Avon Meads Retail Park passing Cinema on right, downhill to Cole Road. Stay on road for 100m then use LHP to Feeder Road. Cross on Pelican Crossing under flyover.

11. Turn right. Follow LHP for 500m. Turn left crossing **Barton Hill Bridge (15)**. Turn right across Marsh Street into Netham Park following cycle way to Netham Road.

13. Cross over 2 roads at traffic lights, turn right over **Netham Lock Bridge East (16)**.

14. Immediate left turn using LHP cross over **New Brislington Bridge (17)**

From the bridge you have a good view of Netham Wier, downstream.

15. At end of green railings turn left following path to **St Anne's Footbridge (18)**. Cross over. (Care needed on exit ramp, it is steep) Turn left following riverside path back to Netham Locks.

16. Cross 1st road using LHP over **Netham Lock Bridge West (19)**. Cross Feeder Road at Pelican, turn right.

In about 200m on the right next to the river you will pass a freight container in camouflage colours with a "green" roof. This houses the Feeder Canal Sand Martin Colony and is also a work of art.

Use LHP to Zebra just past Barton Hill Bridge.

As you carry on past Barton Hill Bridge, which you crossed earlier, underneath a railway bridge and the second St. Philips Causeway Bridge. As you pass under the latter, you can enjoy it's crisp, chunky concrete support columns and the undulating lines of the deck support girders. Next come some pipe 3 and conveyor bridges wrapped in beige corrugated sheeting. (None of these are usable by the public and are excluded from the route).

17. Continue on LHP to **Feeder Road Footbridge (20)**. Pass along lane to end.

Immediately on your left is an impressive stone built Victorian Factory/Warehouse.

18. Cross Silverthorne Lane, use RHP to Xroads at end of pavement.

As you follow Silverthorne Lane left around the corner, where it intersects with Gas Lane and Kingsland Road. On the corner are the very fine former offices of the John Lysaght Galvanising Works, faced in beige coloured smooth sandstone(1891– 3). A few metres further on are wonderful Victorian Disneyesque main gates. The architecture is termed "Rundbogenstil", to be precise).

Cross diagonally to left onto pavement. At first drop down (U-Drive) cross to LHP. Turn left at T-junction (Avon Street).

Straight in front of you at the T-junction is the huge stone-built former Avon Street Gas Works Retort House (1850s), now a nightclub.

Cross **Marsh Bridge (21)**

19. Cross over Feeder Road at Pelican Crossing immediately followed by crossing Albert Road at Pelican Crossing. Use RHP along Albert Road. Immediately after railway overhead bridge, use drop downs in the side road (Victoria Street). Continue on RHP to **Totterdown Bridge (22)**

20.Exit keeping left following RHP for 700m. Just before bridge (8) use Pelican Crossing (Fowlers store) & again to cross York Road onto **Bath Bridge West (8)**.

21.Turn left onto Clarence Road. Keep to LHP past steps up to Langton Street (Banana) Bridge to **Bedminster East (24) and West (25) Bridges**. Cross both using Pelican Crossings.

At the western bridge, if you face south, across Coronation Road behind some trees, is the handsome former Zion Congregational Chapel, (1830). A few metres to the east of the bridge on the north bank is a Victorian drinking fountain, a listed structure, dated 1861, pre-dating this bridge by 20 years. It has a cast iron shell-shaped bowl and a marble splashback.

22. Go up Redcliff Hill on LHP into Guinea Street. After about 100m cross to RHP . Proceed to end & cross **Bathurst Basin Footbridge (26)**

23.Turn left along quayside to Commercial Street turning left crossing **Bathurst Basin Road Bridge East (27)**

25.Cross the road at Lower Guinea Street junction returning

to & crossing **Bathurst Basin Road Bridge West (28)**

26. Turn left into Cumberland Road.

At the start of Cumberland Road on the north side is a high stone wall. This is the remains of the outer wall of the city's "New Gaol", completed 1820, destroyed in the Bristol Reform Bill Riots of 1831, then rebuilt. A few metres down the road is the old gateway with an arch and two flanking towers. Public hangings took place on the walkway between the towers, sometimes in front of a crowd of thousands.

Use LHP along Cumberland Road to **Gaol Ferry Bridge (29)**.

If you turn left, in about 40m there is a gap in the railings where a track leads you down in a zig-zag 6 or 7m below the bridge. Stop before the path becomes muddy and slippery or you may end up in the water! From here you will get a great view down the river, with the bridge now high over your head.

27. Cross bridge and turn right following river to **Vauxhall Bridge (30)**. (Exit ramps are fairly steep. *Caution needed*)

28. Head west on Cumberland Road using RHP for 500m (*care needed at entry to & exit from Overfall Yard for vehicles and kerbs without dropdowns*) bearing right into Avon Crescent. Near end use dropdowns to cross the road onto bike route crossing over Metrobus route onto LHP of **Ashton Avenue Bridge (31)**.

The three huge redbrick Tobacco Bond warehouses (early 1900s) are prominent features here.

29. Exit bridge crossing road at Pelican Crossing passing under

Brunel Way bearing round to right up the access ramp to road level. Turn left along side the road to 1st exit ramp crossing **Avon Bridge (32)**

30. At bottom of exit ramp turn left across **South Entrance Lock Bridge (33)**

31. Bear right around the centre support pillar of Plimsoll Bridge. *(suggest clockwise. Bit tight between support pillar and containers. If anti-clockwise route taken it is also tight but very close to edge of quay)* Go ahead to **South Entrance Lock Walkway (34)**

32. Passing a large white kedge anchor continuing along the quay to pavement. Cross Merchants Road on drop downs turn right. Pass Nova Scotia pub on left hand to drop down opposite cycle path. Cross road turn right. After 30m go left onto the end of pavement past red brick houses (Ashton Avenue). Past house cross road at drop downs to cycle path. Cross Cumberland & Smeaton Roads on drop downs. Turn right towards Bond warehouse. Keep on LHP warehouse & round corner. Use dropdown to cross road at "Brunel Lock Development" sign. Turn right follow pavement up slope to cross **Plimsoll Bridge (35)**

33. Bear left down exit ramp turning 180° at end then going left through Skate Board Park under two flyovers to Pelican Crossing. Take crossing to right to use RHP on Hotwells Road. Continue for 300m then cross Merchant Road and Hotwell Road at Pelican Crossings. Use LHP along Hotwell Road to roundabout bearing left up Jacob's Wells Road then Berkley Place bearing left again at Triangle West. At top turn left

along Queen's Road then left again at Richmond Hill. Left at end then use zebra crossing to RHP along Queens Road as far as Lansdown Place. Use walkway through Victoria Square onwards through the archway to Clifton Down Road. Cross on Zebra Crossing turn right following the RHP to roundabout. Turn left along Beaufort Buildings using Zebra Crossing just before the end. Continue on RHP to 100m before bridge then cross to LHP. Eventually you have arrived at **Clifton Suspension Bridge (36)**

Just over the bridge is the Burwalls mansion on the left and the Bridge Visitor Centre on the right. Burwalls was built in 1872 for local newspaper proprietor Joseph Leech, designed by local architects Foster and Wood. In 1897, it became the family home of George Wills, tobacco baron. In 1946, it was bought by Bristol University. In 2016, it was converted into luxury apartments. The excellent Bridge Visitor Centre is open every day, with free entry. And, oh look, it sells the official handbook for the bridges walk/cycle route: "From Brycgstow to Bristol in 45 Bridges"!

34. 34. After crossing the bridge keep to LHP along Bridge Road crossing over Leigh Road on Pelican Crossing and going through archway into Ashton Court Estate. Following the tarmac road downhill. Take sharp right turn near bottom of hill signposted NCR 33 then follow to Chapel Lodge car park. Turn left at exit using LHP ending in Blackmores Road. At roundabout at end use dropdowns to cross Clannage Road turning left on pavement. Immediately past where pavement narrows (before first house) turn right onto minor

road. Follow past allotments, skate park and under Brunel Way to river Avon. Turn left following track for 10k through Pill to **Avonmouth Bridge (37)**

This track is often muddy/wet in winter or following rain and around Pill may be subject to tidal flooding, so avoid times of high tides.

Alternative Route : *Route involves 4k narrow lanes with pavements, intermittent pavements from Portbury village on busy roads. Only recommended for fully road suitable scooters/chair.* At end of Bridge Road, cross Leigh Road by Pelican Crossing turning right using LHP about 2k then turning left into Sandy Lane. After 3k turn right into Failand Lane following to Portbury village. At A369 cross using Pelican Crossing then follow Avon Cycleway through Easton in Gordano and Pill to **Avonmouth Bridge (37)**

35. Cross the Avonmouth Bridge and descent ramp. At bottom of exit ramp turn right. Use RHP up the hill bearing right opposite The George Inn into Station Road. Use 1st Zebra Crossing following signs to station along LHP. Turn left into Hung Road. Cross Portway (A4) by Pelican Crossing turning left. Follow RHP to Sea Mills. Cross viaduct taking 1st right towards Seamills Station. **Portway Viaduct (38)** is to right at end of the downward slope.

This viaduct is one of Bristol's loveliest bridges but cannot be appreciated unless you make a short diversion down to the grassy park on the north side. if you cycle a hundred metres north and look back you get a splendid view of the viaduct. Between the viaduct and the river Avon are the remains of a wet dock built in

1712 by Joshua Franklyn, a Bristol merchant, to eliminate the need for large sailing ships to navigate the tricky route of the River Avon any further upstream. However, it never thrived due to poor transport links and was in disrepair by the end of the 18th century.

36. Return to Portway. After 5k, in Cumberland Basin Road, cross into Skate Park passing under 2 viaducts to Pelican Crossing. Take crossing to right onto RHP of Hotwell Road. Continue on LHP to "Grain Barge" then follow quayside back in direction of locks crossing **Poole's Wharf Bridge (39)**

In 50 m you pass a wide gap in the harbour wall which was the former entrance to the huge Merchants/Champion's Wet Dock (1773) which survived until 1967.

37. Continue past Pump House Pub turning left at road crossing Cross **New Junction Lock Bridge (40)** and continue over **Old Junction Lock Bridge (41)**

The shiny curved corrugated metal cabins that flank the bridge house the control rooms and pumps that open the lock gates and the bridge.

38. At Nova Scotia pub turn left, stay on road down slope and turn right through Underfall Boat Yard.

On your right in Underfall Yard, after the workshops, is a redbrick building that houses the control systems for the sluice gates (underground beneath you) that control the level of the water in the Floating Harbour.

Follow along quayside cycle route to Wapping Road.

At Bristol Marina, turn right into Hannover Place & after 100m pass the Albion Dock.

Albion Dock (1820) was the largest dry dock in Bristol, created by Charles Hill and James Hilhouse, who built many ships on the site until 1977. Abels Shipbuilders occupied it 1980–2016.

At Gas Ferry Road turn left.

The head office of Aardman Animations, birthplace of Wallace and Gromit, is straight ahead before you make the turn. Wallace and Gromit now live in a large mansion in Beverly Hills USA.

Turn right along harbourside following bike route behind M-Shed. 39. Turn left into Wapping Rd & take bike lane over **Prince Street Bridge (42)**

39. Keep to LHP up Prince Street turning left at Friar's lane crossing **Pero's Bridge (43)**.

St Augustine's Reach was constructed in the 13th century to divert the river Frome. It was a gigantic work of civil engineering for the time. It used to be one kilometre long, 40m wide and 6 m deep. It became the heart of the Port of Bristol — crowded with tall-masted ocean-going ships. Much of it was covered over in the 1930s to create "The Centre".

40. Go straight ahead turning right past the first building on to the RHP of Canon's Road. Follow the pavement until it opens out into The Centre. Bear right with Broad Quay House on your right. Use Pelican Crossing over Prince Street to go through Queen Square diagonally.

Queen Square is one of the finest Georgian squares in the country,

named after Queen Anne, who visited the city in 1702. It was extensively damaged by fire in the Bristol Corn Law riots of 1831. The equestrian statue of William III, in the centre of the square, is by John Michael Rysbrack, cast in 1733, and is one of the best of its kind in Europe.

At mini roundabout cross over road and cross **Redcliffe Bridge (44)**

As you approach Redcliffe Bridge the cathedral-sized St Mary Redcliffe Church (mostly 13th and 14th century) is behind it in the middle distance.

41. Straight ahead to roundabout. Take 1st exit crossing over at Zebra Crossing onto Portwall Lane.

Part of Bristol's Mediaeval city walls ran along here.

At end follow cycle route to left joining Victoria Street. Cross on Zebra Crossing to RHP. Proceed up Victoria Street to Counterslip. Turn left at Old Temple Street (Premier Inn) going straight ahead in narrow passageway to **Castle Bridge (45)**

42. Turn right on cycle route in Castle Park crossing **Castle Ditch Bridge (3)**

43. Turn immediately left following path to Queen Street. Turn left and at 1st bend head back into Castle Park.