

LEGEND

ROUTES:  South Swindon Green Trail (and section)  Alternative green and urban paths

FEATURES / SITES OF INTEREST:  on-Trail site  site on alternative path  birdwatching  mural

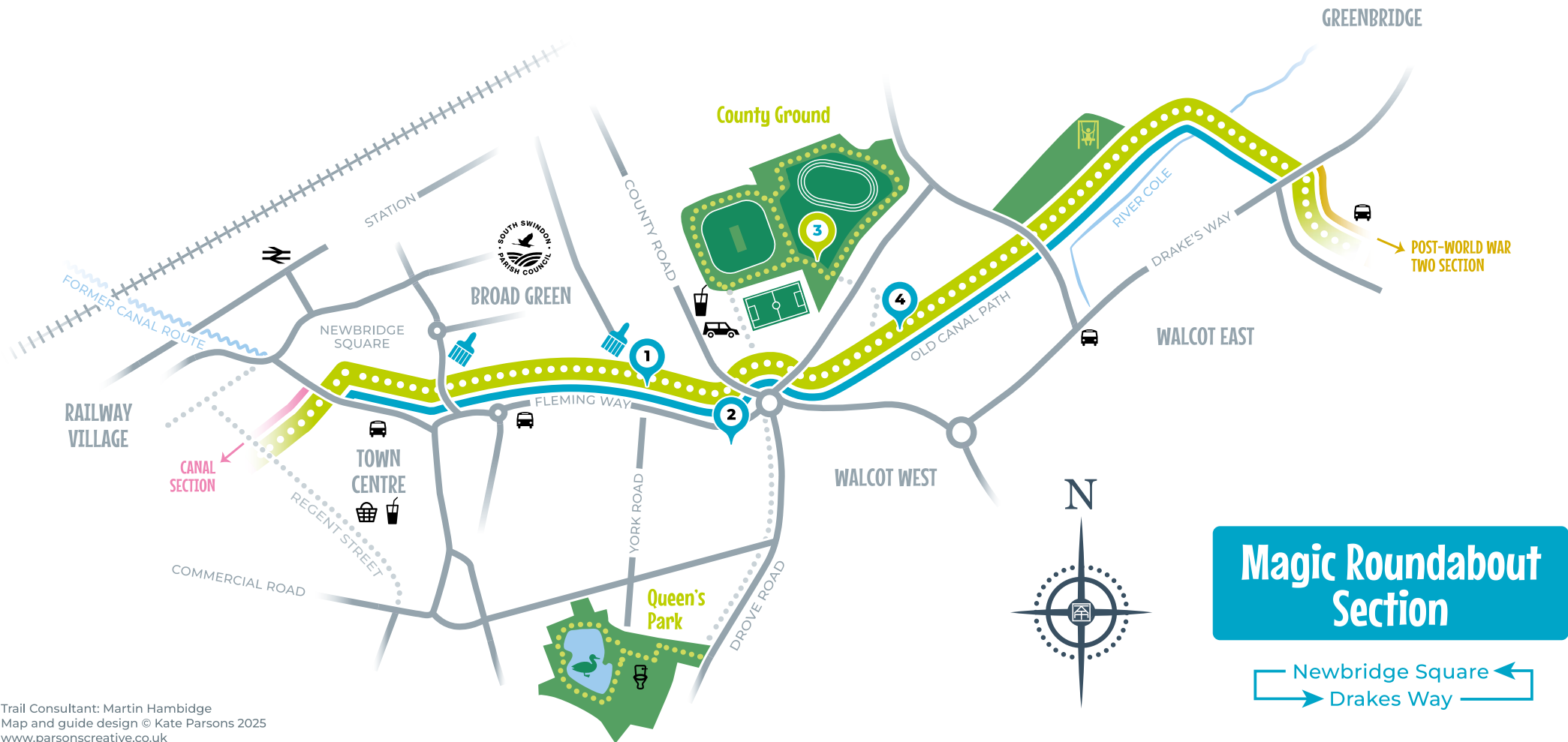
AMENITIES:  café or pub  shops  bus stop / route  toilets  car park

SCALE:  — Approx. 10 minutes — 



South Swindon Green Trail

Circular trail through South Swindon's green areas and transport history



Magic Roundabout Section

Newbridge Square
Drakes Way

These notes follow the South Swindon Green Trail clockwise from Newbridge Square, along the route of the Wilts & Berks Canal. Read from the bottom to the top if starting your walk at Drakes Way.

After the closure of the canal, Swindon's road transport history shaped the first part of this section of the Green Trail to the Magic Roundabout – built to ease traffic congestion in the 1970s. From the early 1900s, electric trams were the first form of public transport, connecting Rodbourne, Gorse Hill and Old Town with the town centre at the tram terminus at the junction of Bridge Street and Fleet Street. The last tram ran on 11 July 1929 to be replaced with buses.

Ever since, this area has been a centre for the local bus network. The Fleming Way Bus Interchange, opened in 2025, is an interchange for all bus services with landscaped pedestrian and cycle routes that improve biodiversity.



On the Newbridge Square side of the interchange turn right to walk along Fleming Way. Walk to the Whale Bridge junction, and cross over Corporation Street to Medgbury Road.



The **Golden Lion Bridge mural** was created by local artist Ken White in 1976 and is based on a photograph taken in the early 1900s of the Golden Lion Bridge across the canal. The mural was repainted and restored in 1983, 2010 and 2025.

Whale Bridge was a hump-backed bridge built in 1804 over the canal to carry a farm trackway that would eventually become Princes Street. It was demolished during the construction of Fleming Way in 1963. Fleming Way follows the course of the canal. It is named for Swindon Town and England footballer Harold Fleming who played from 1907 to 1924.



Continue along Fleming Way past the small retail park, this was formerly the site of the Garrard's factory, and on to the pedestrian crossing.

From 1919 to 1982, the Garrard's factory made world-famous, high-quality manufacturer of record player turntables.



1 At the Fleming Way pedestrian crossing, the brick abutments of **York Road Canal Bridge** still stand. Built around 1907 the bridge, which took the road over the canal, was demolished in the 1960s during the construction of Fleming Way.



The murals along Fleming Way were painted for Swindon Paint Fest, founded in 2022.



2 The **Magic Roundabout** is built over the old Wilts & Berks Canal whilst the Fire Station, which opened in 1959, stands on the site of **Swindon Wharf and Fairholm** – the home to the clerks and superintendents of the canal company.

Opened in 1972, the Magic Roundabout was originally named County Islands. It was always known locally as The Magic Roundabout, after an animated children's TV series – in the late 1980s, its official name was changed.



Walk round the corner, past the service station for the pedestrian crossing to the County Ground, then over Shrivenham Road. The Green Trail continues north-eastwards up the track behind the bus stop on Queen's Drive, again following the line of the Wilts & Berks Canal immediately to the rear of the back gardens of Shrivenham Road.



3 **ALTERNATIVE ROUTE:** At the **County Ground** walk across the car park and around the football stadium to walk around the sports pitches. The County Ground is home to Swindon Town FC, Swindon Cricket Club and Swindon Harriers Athletics Club. Swindon Town FC was founded in 1879 and has played at the County Ground since 1896. The Cricket Club, founded in 1844, is one of the oldest clubs in the UK – its home is a fine, Grade II listed, brick and wood pavilion built in 1893.



4 **Marsh Farm Bridge** was built in 1805 to provide access over the canal to Marsh Farm and Shrivenham Road. It is one of the oldest canal bridges in Swindon and typical of bridge design of that era.



Cross over Ocotal Way at the pedestrian crossing and continue along the path. On your right-hand side you can see the River Cole through the hedgerow.



Much of the River Cole is now underground and built over. The river joins the Thames near Lechlade.



As the Green Trail bears right, you cross the River Cole over a bridge to the subway under Drakes Way.

This section of the South Swindon Green Trail ends at the Drakes Way underpass. From here you can continue on the Trail's Post-World War Two Section, or walk to Greenbridge Retail Park along the main road.

South Swindon Green Trail Code

- Keep to the South Swindon Green Trail or follow appropriate public rights of way.
- Dogs should be kept on a lead.
- Clean up after your dog and use the waste bins.
- Take your litter home.
- Guard against all risk of fire.
- Take special care when crossing roads.
- Cyclists should give way to walkers.
- When walking alone on the quieter sections of the Trail, be aware of your surroundings



For more information and to download other Green Trail section maps scan the QR codes on the Trail's waymarkers or go to www.southswindon-pc.gov.uk