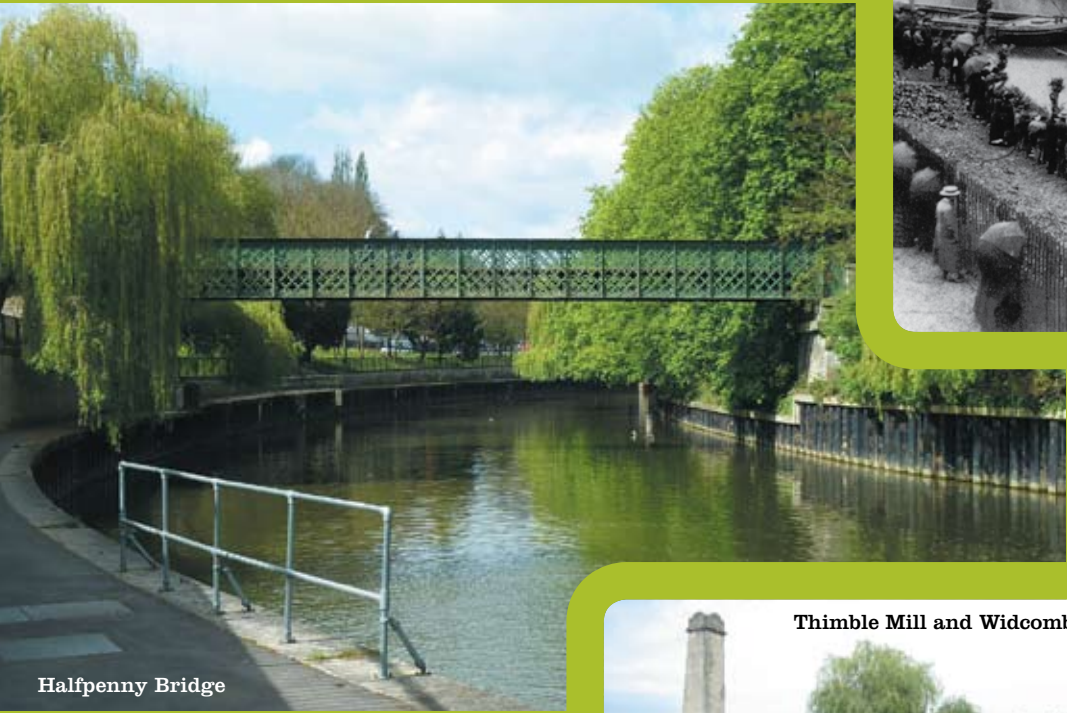


# The Kennet & Avon Canal in Bath

## A circular waymarked audio trail

**Halfpenny Bridge** gets its name from the halfpenny toll paid by pedestrians to cross the Avon on this footbridge. There was a terrible accident here in June 1877 when the original wooden bridge collapsed, tumbling dozens of people into the river. The bridge was rebuilt in metal and is still in use today – and there's no toll!



**Thimble Mill Pumping Station** was vital to the working of the canal as it pumped water up from the river, replacing the water that was lost each time a boat went through the locks. A second pump at Lock 11 lifted the water up above Lock 13, a rise of around 65ft.

**Widcombe Lock** – also known as Bottom Lock or Chapel Lock – is at the junction between the River Avon and the Kennet & Avon Canal. It is the first (or bottom) lock on the canal but confusingly it is called Lock 7 because there are 6 other locks along the River Avon between here and Bristol.



**Bath Deep Lock** is a new lock created when Rossiter Road was built in 1976. Locks 8 and 9 were merged, creating the second deepest lock in the country. The huge chamber is 19ft 5ins (5.92m) deep – awesome for pedestrians and boaters.

**Wash House Lock** has an elegant iron footbridge crossing the canal. It seems the lock gets its name from the washing that local women did for wealthy visitors who came to Bath for the Season.



**Darlington Wharf** was a stopping place for the Scotch Boats. The canal was diverted here to make way for Brunel's Great Western Railway. Look over the wall to see this amazing feat of engineering. Open-air public baths used to be here near the wharf, where men and boys could wash.



**Sydney Gardens** were created as pleasure gardens in 1795. The Sydney Hotel, now the Holburne Museum, added to the gardens' charms by offering entertainment and fine dining. When the route of the new canal was proposed, the Kennet & Avon Canal Company was charged 2,000 guineas to allow it to route the canal through the gardens. Strict conditions were imposed, including 'neat iron bridges' to be supplied by Stothert, the famous Bath engineering company.



**Cleveland House** is one of the treasures of the Kennet & Avon Canal. Built by the Duke of Cleveland as the headquarters for the canal company, it was one of the first purpose-built office blocks in Europe.



**Sydney Wharf** has been a busy wharf for many years. Coal from the Somerset Coalfield was unloaded here, as were slates and agricultural products. Fly boats left from here as well – fast boats pulled by teams of horses. Today you can hire boats from the wharf.

**Baird's Maltings** was a malt house beside the canal. Grain was soaked in water, then sprouted and dried to produce malt to make beer. At the top of the buildings opposite the towpath you can still see 'Hugh Baird & Sons Maltsters' painted in white on the end wall, beside the conical malt house chimney.



**Top Lock** is close to the lock-keeper's cottage where, in former times, the lock keeper lived. Top Lock Cottage was also known as the barter store, as goods were traded between boaters. Later the cottage was used by Bath Humane Society to store rescue and resuscitation equipment to help people who fell into the canal.

**Pumphouse Chimney** was built in this ornate style as the wealthy residents on Bathwick Hill did not want to overlook an industrial style chimney. Specialist stonemasons restored the 30ft carved stone chimney in 2011, carefully replicating the two degree lean that the chimney had developed since its construction in the 1840s.



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