



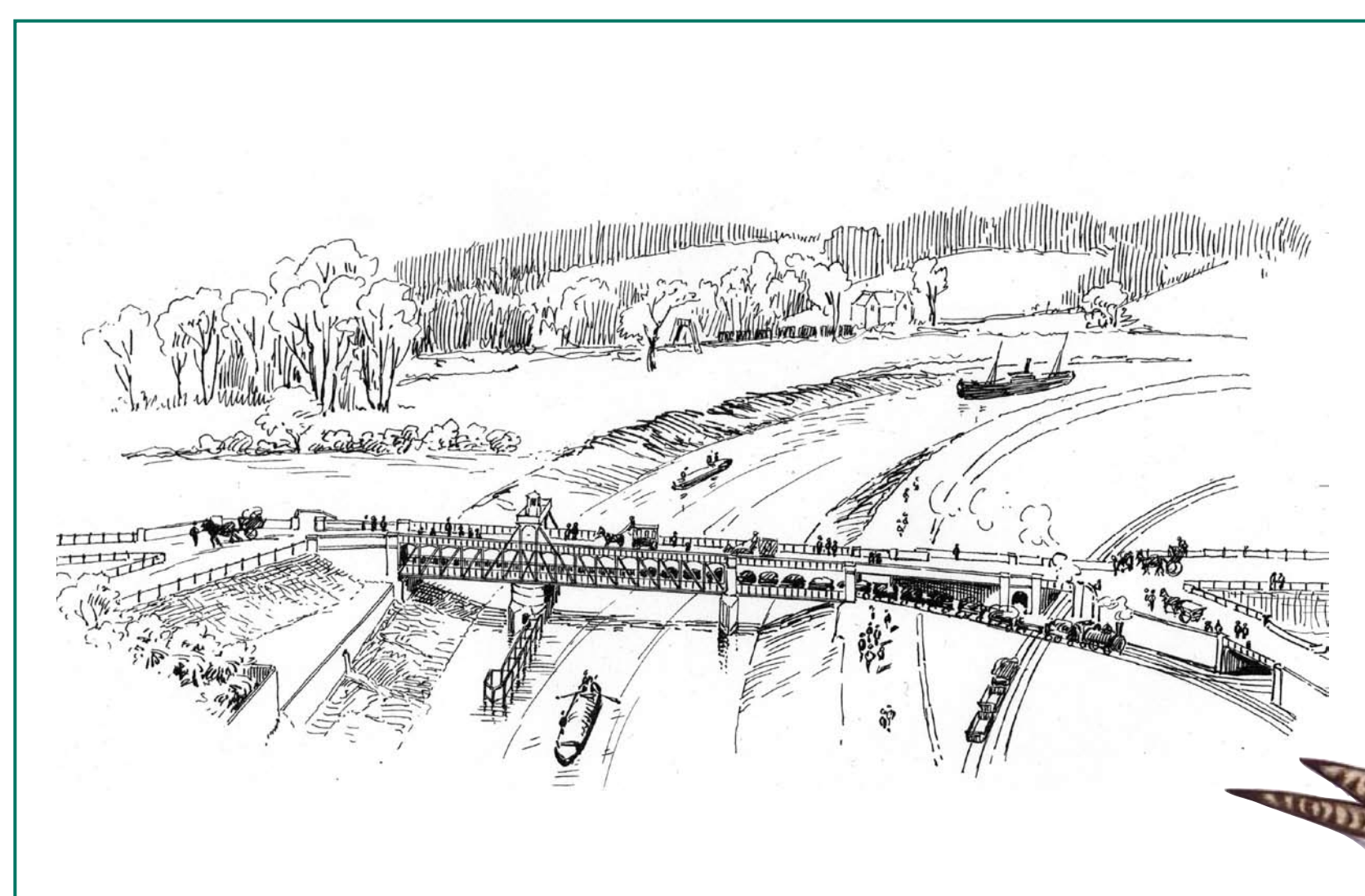
# South Bristol Avon New Cut



Cormorant



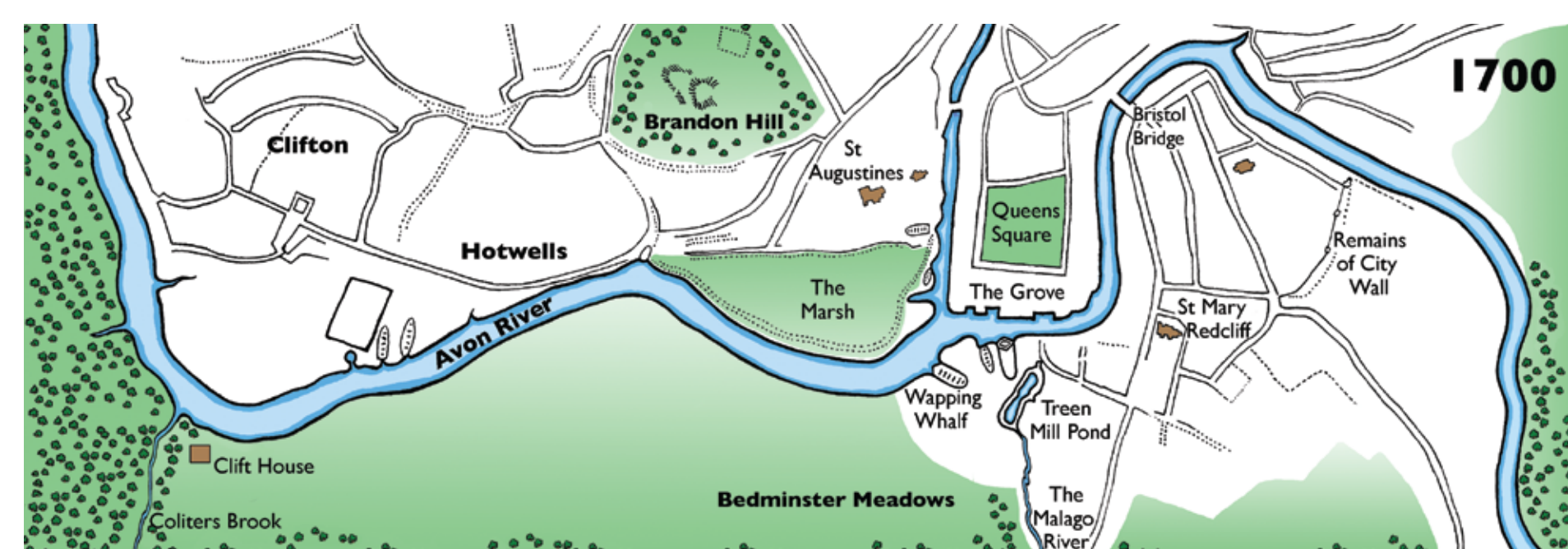
Gaol Ferry Footbridge



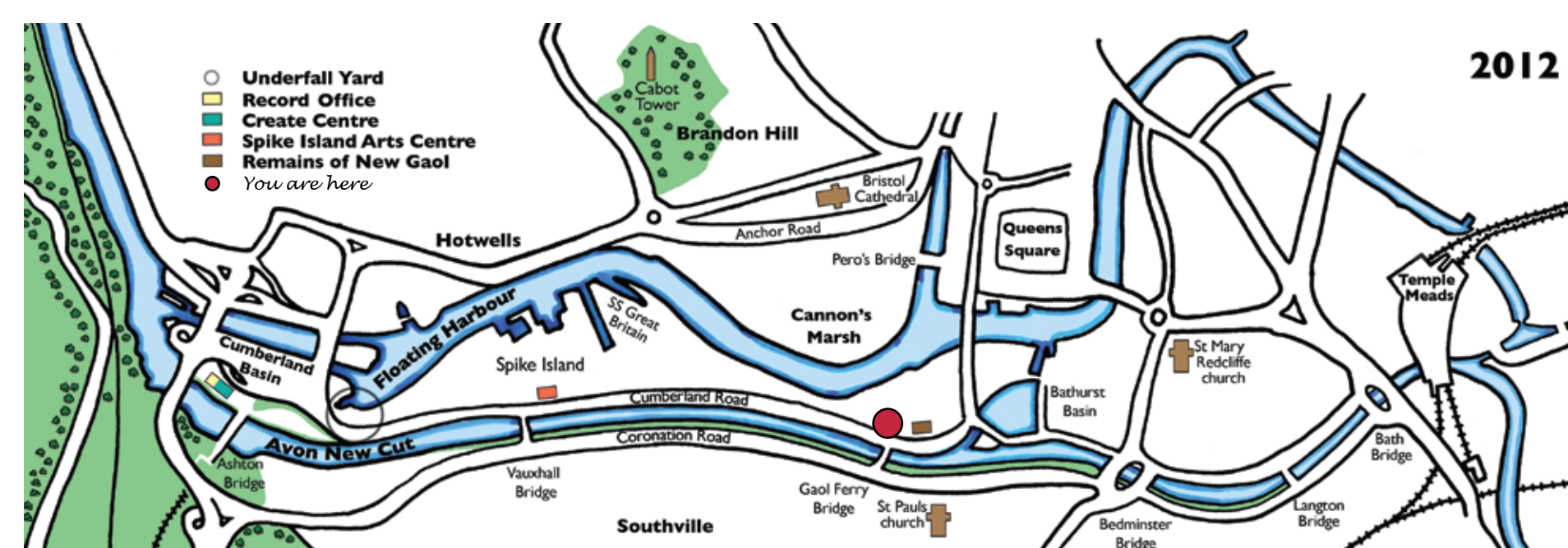
Ashton Road Rail Bridge

## Welcome to Avon New Cut – a history.

The New Cut was dug in the early 19th Century to create a tidal free ‘floating harbour’ so ships could berth safely. The original design was drawn up by William Milton in 1791. It was later adopted by William Jessop, a distinguished Georgian civil engineer, who presented it to the city’s Merchant Venturers for approval in 1802.



River Avon in 1700



Floating Harbour and New Cut in 2012

The project was supervised by Jessop’s son Josias, and the first sod cut in 1804. It was completed in 1809, when the tidal water was let into the ‘New Cut’ for the first time.

An overfall dam, built at the head of the New Cut, created early problems for the harbour. It stopped the tide cleaning out the harbour, which filled up with pollution and silt. Eventually, Brunel converted the dam into an underfall sluice, which successfully restored the scouring effect.

### Bridges

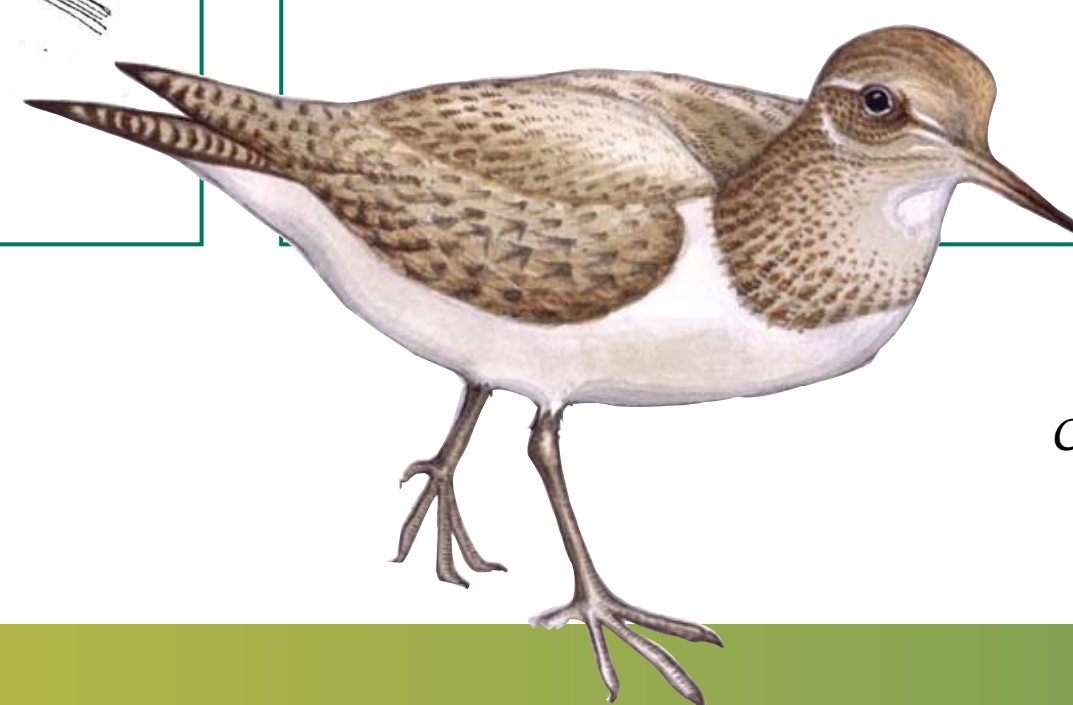
**Vauxhall Swing Bridge** – Lady Ashmead opened the swing bridge with a silver key on 1st June 1900

**Gaol Ferry Footbridge** – The bridge was opened in 1935. Before it was built people crossed by the Wapping gaol ferry, which carried around 10,000 people across the river each week.

**Ashton Road Rail Bridge** – Built in 1906, this two decked swing bridge carried a road above, and rail below. It opened to shipping about 10 times a day.

**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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Common sandpiper

parks for people and wildlife

