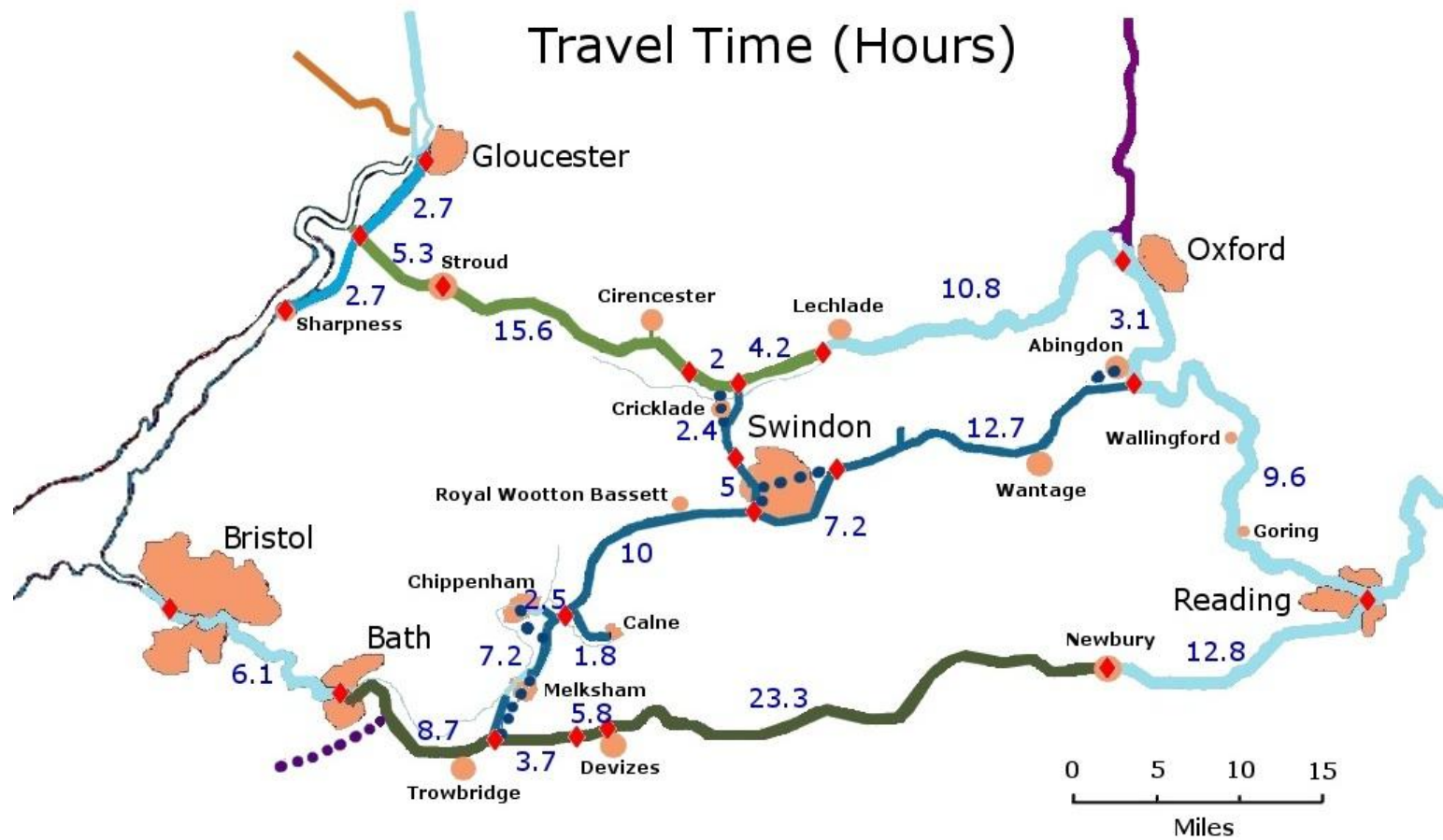


## Possible Routes

## Hire Boats and Hire Boat Bases



The map above shows the estimated times for travelling the different sections of the network. The calculations are shown in the appendix. The times that it takes to go through a lock will generally be faster on the narrow locks. The times will also be reduced for lock flights. The timings shown are nominal, account has been taken for the navigation, for instance average speeds of boats on the River Thames are higher than on the canals. As an example Wichelstowe to Semington could take between 13 to 17 hours cruising time. This uncertainty is half a day's cruising.

The most popular hiring periods for a boat is 1 week; however, other periods are long weekends (3 nights) and 2 week cruises.

This network will become extremely popular for boaters. There are a significant number of hire boats on the Southern Oxford Canal, the River Thames and the Kennet & Avon Canal. The hub of the network Swindon is the obvious place to locate hire bases. Wichelstowe to Blunsdon 5 hours and the Swindon "eastern by-pass" 7 hours mean that the hire bases at the different locations are best for different cruising destinations.

Attractions within easy reach of the waterways will add interest to the holiday experience. There are plenty of places to visit within easy walking distance. New technology will allow the traveller to go further a field.

## **Cruising Times**

**North Swindon hire boat base:** Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, Cotswold Canals and Higher Thames.

**Blunsdon to Oxford:** 17 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 5.8 hours per day.

**Blunsdon to Gloucester:** 28 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 9.3 hours per day.

**Blunsdon to Stroud:** 20 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 6.7 hours per day.

**South Swindon hire boat base:** Wilts & Berks to Semington, Kennet & Avon Canal

**Wichelstowe to Lacock and Calne:** 15 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 5 hours per day.

**Wichelstowe to Bath:** 24 - 26 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 8 to 8.6 hours per day.

**East Swindon hire boat base:** Wilts & Berks Canal to Jubilee Junction and the River Thames

**Shrivenham to Jubilee Junction:** 12.7 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 4.2 hours per day.

**Shrivenham to Oxford:** 15.8 hours one way.

One week there and back cruise at 5.3 hours per day.

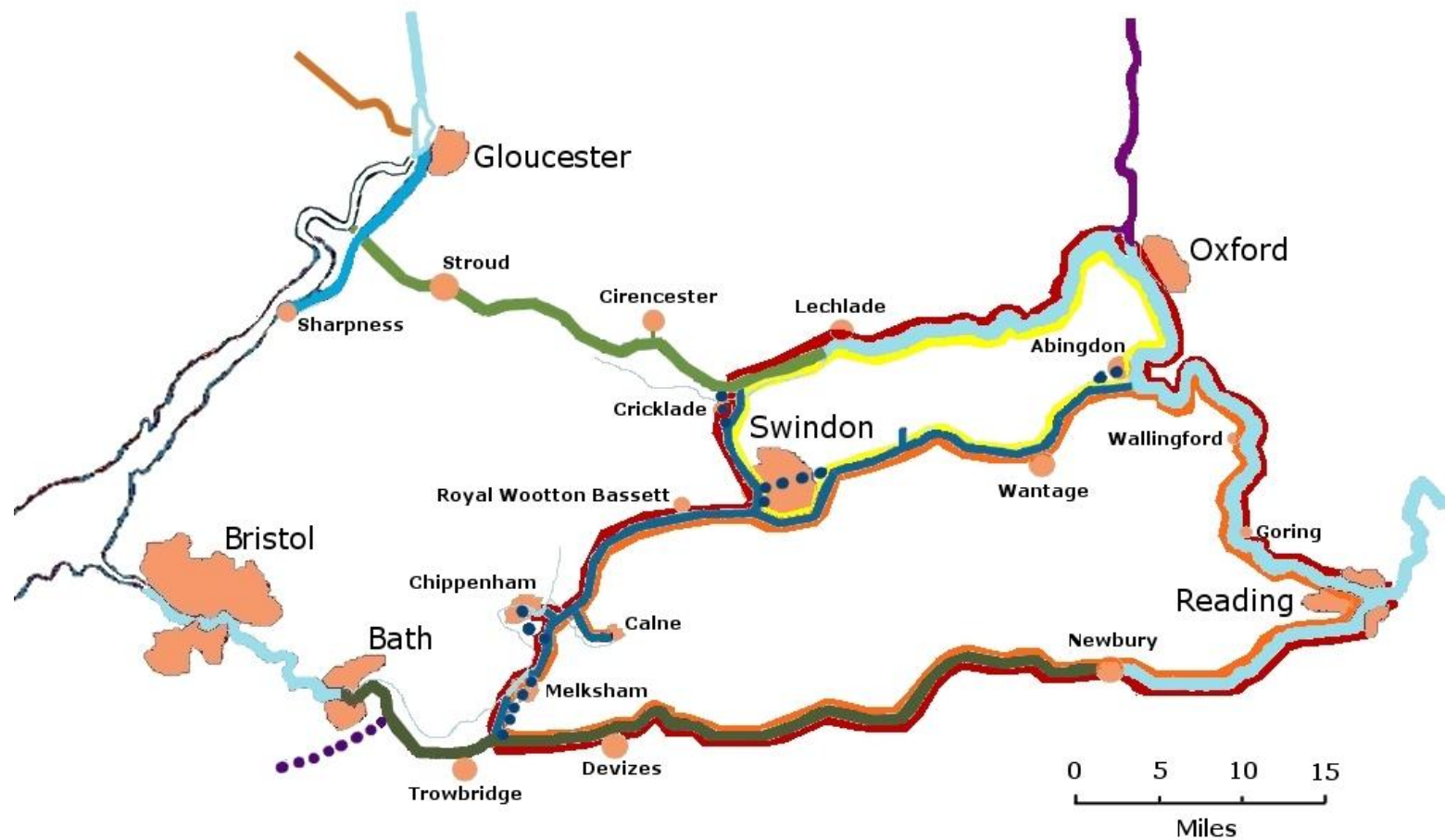
**Shrivenham to Reading:** 22.5 hrs one way.

One week there and back cruise at 7.5 hours per day.

**Shrivenham to Oxford and Reading:** 25.6 hours one way.

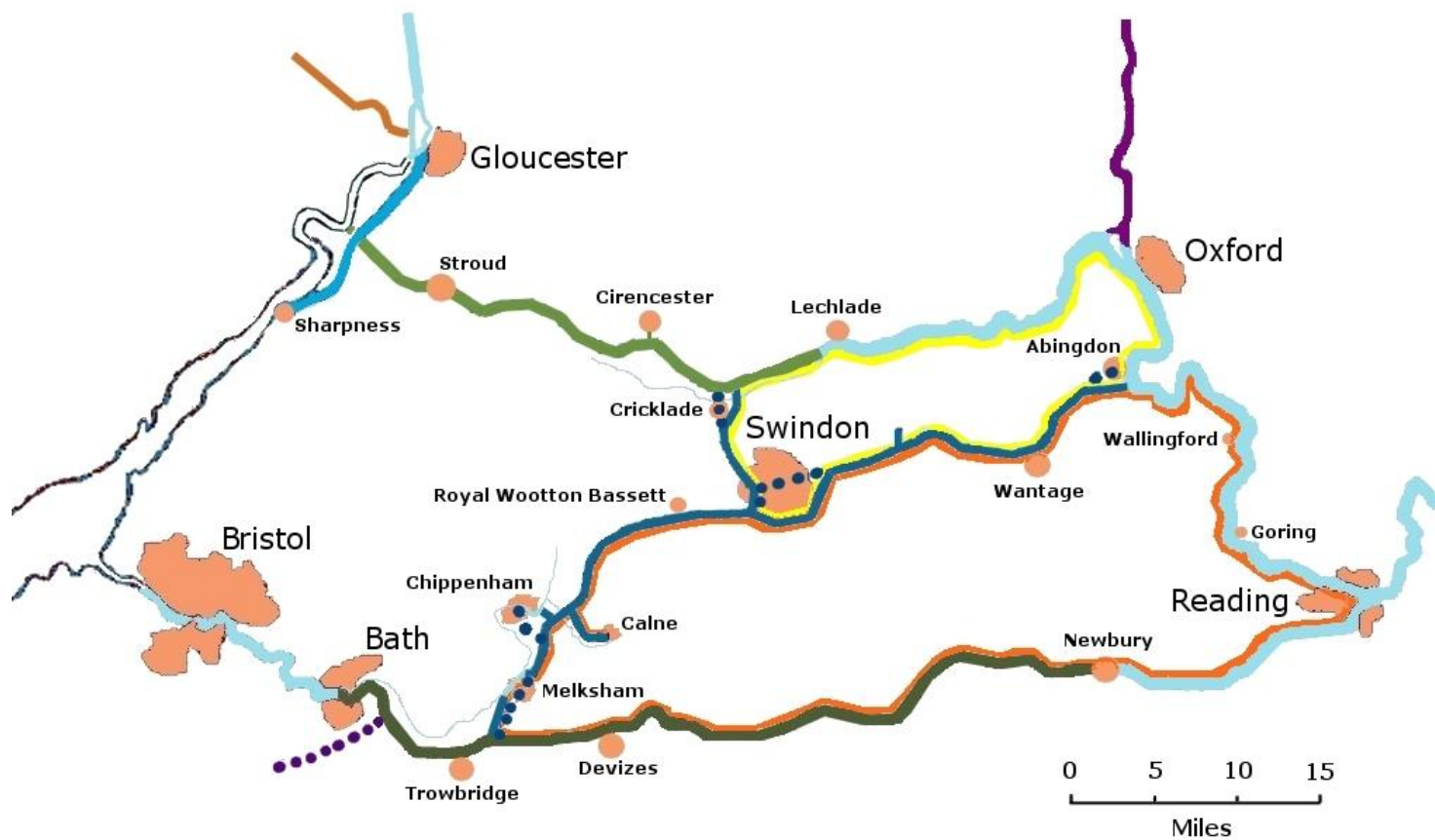
One week there and back cruise 8.5 hours per day

As well as one way cruises there are possibilities of loops or rings.

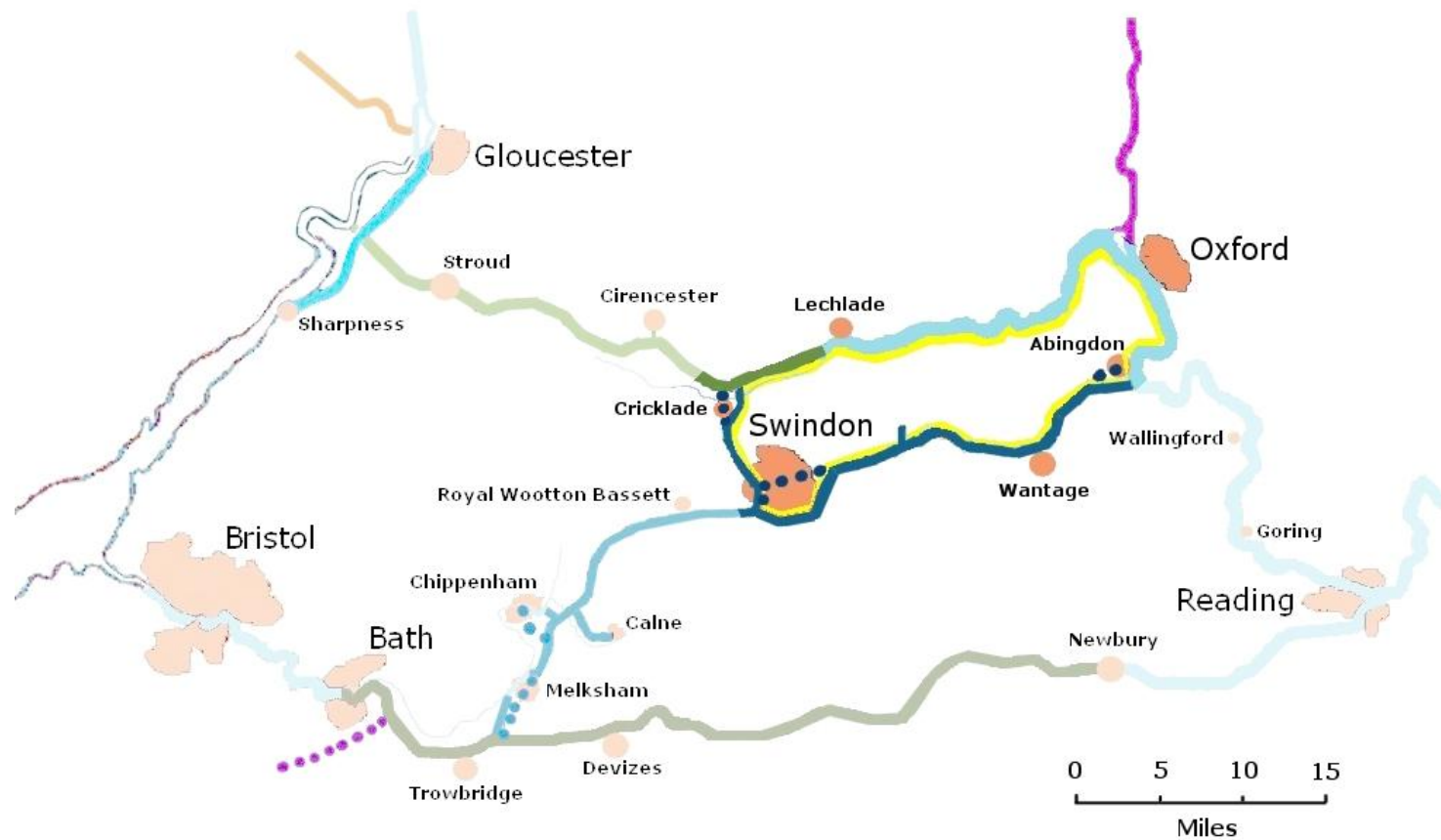


- **Northern Ring:** Swindon, Cricklade, Oxford, Abingdon and Wantage.  
45 hours - 1 week cruise at 7.6 hours per day.
- **Southern Ring:** Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Wantage.  
92 hours - 2 week cruise at 7.1 hours per day.
- **Large Ring:** Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Abingdon and Oxford.  
98 hours - 2 week cruise at 7.5 hours per day.

**Figure of 8** - northern & southern rings: Swindon, Cricklade, Oxford, Abingdon, Wantage, Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Wantage, Swindon.  
137 hours - 3 weeks at 6.9 hours per day.



- **Northern Ring:** Swindon, Cricklade, Oxford, Abingdon and Wantage.  
45 hours - 1 week cruise at 7.6 hours per day.
- **Southern Ring:** Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Wantage.  
92 hours - 2 week cruise at 7.1 hours per day.



**Northern Ring:** Swindon, Cricklade, Oxford, Abingdon and Wantage.  
45 hours - 1 week cruise at 7.6 hours per day.

**Northern Ring:** Swindon, Cricklade, Oxford, Abingdon and Wantage.

45 hours - 1 week cruise at 7.6 hours per day.

**Southern Ring:** Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Wantage.

92 hours - 2 week cruise at 7.1 hours per day.

**Large Ring:** Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Abingdon and Oxford.

98 hours - 2 week cruise at 7.5 hours per day.

**Figure of 8** - northern & southern rings: Swindon, Cricklade, Oxford, Abingdon, Wantage, Swindon, Devizes, Reading, Wantage, Swindon.

137 hours - 3 weeks at 6.9 hours per day.

There are 3 other possible rings that use the Severn Estuary.

### **The Large Ring**

Bristol, Devizes, Reading, Oxford, Stroud and Sharpness

### **The Western and North Ring**

Bristol, Melksham, Swindon, Abingdon, Oxford, Stroud, Sharpness

### **The Western Ring**

Bristol, Melksham, Swindon, Cricklade, Stroud, Sharpness.

**Severn Estuary is tidal and will only be tackled by experienced boaters. Hire boats are banned from this section of the route.**

**The network will open up other long distance routes for instance:**

**Bristol to Gloucester:** 65 hours one way - 2 weeks at 5 hours a day.  
There and back in 3 weeks at 6.5 hours per day.

**Bath to Oxford (via Swindon and Cricklade)**  
48 hours one way – 1 week at 8 hours per day

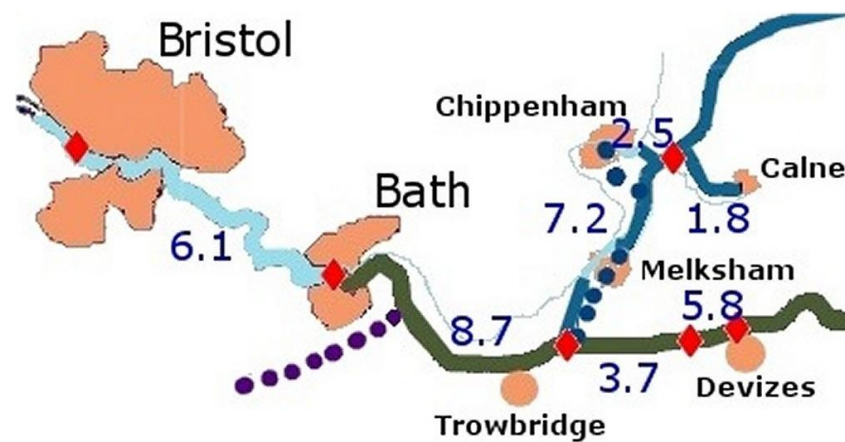
**Stroud to Oxford:**  
31 hours one way - One week one way cruise 5 hours a day.  
There and back in 1 week at 10.3 hours per day.

Rather than cruise for many hours a day, boaters may like to take it easy...

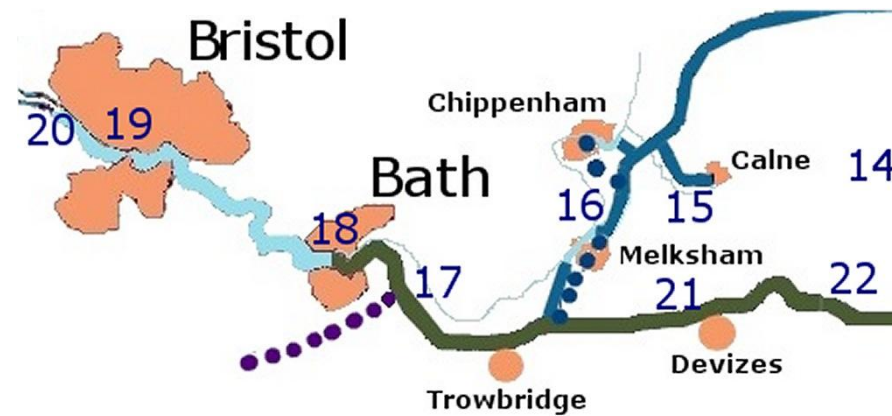


### Shorter Cruises: Example 1

People hiring the boats may not want to go very far. There are sections of the network that lend themselves to this. Two such areas are Chippenham & Calne area of the Wilts & Berks Canal and west of the Caen Hill Flight on the Kennet & Avon Canal. The cruising times (in hours) are shown below.



Boats hired in this area on a weeks cruising can easily get to Bath, Lacock, Calne and for the enthusiast to Bristol. This area is also good for long weekend cruise.

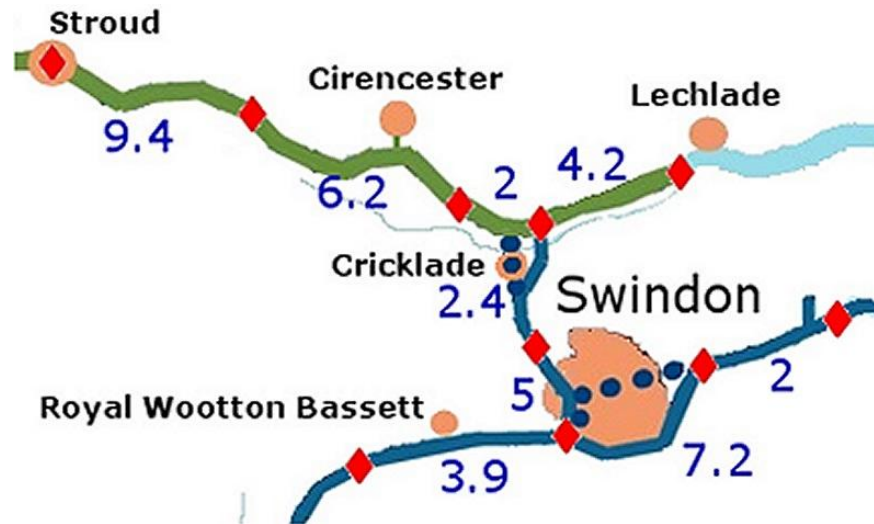


**The nearby attractions include:**

- 14. Avebury:** The world's largest prehistoric stone circle (circa 2500 BC).
- 15. Bowood House and Gardens:** A good family day out.
- 16. Lacock:** 13th century village, abbey and the Fox Talbot Museum.
- 17 Bradford on Avon to Bath:** Avoncliff and Dundas Aqueducts, Claverton Pump.
- 18. Bath:** Pulteney Bridge, Bath Abbey, Royal Crescent, Roman Baths.
- 19. Bristol Harbourside:** Attractions include Brunel's ss Great Britain.
- 20 Clifton Suspension Bridge:** Brunel's masterpiece.
- 21.Caen Hill:** 29 locks, 16 of which are in a spectacular flight.
- 22. Vale of Pewsey:** Attractive valley with a remote 15 mile long canal pound.

### Shorter Cruises: Example 2

In the Swindon area of the Wilts & Berks Canal and on the eastern end of the Thames & Severn Canal and the upper reaches of the River Thames.



Boats hired in this area on a weeks cruising can easily get to Cirencester, the Cotswold Water Park, the Higher Thames and Swindon, This area is also good for long weekend cruising. Normally boaters would cruise to Sapperton Tunnel; they could then walk over the tunnel and explore the Golden valley by foot. South of Swindon, boaters may want to cruise to the top of Seven Locks.



**The nearby attractions include:**

- 3. Golden Valley:** Attractive heavily wooded valley climbing to the Sapperton Tunnel.
- 4. Sapperton Tunnel:** At 3817 yards the longest tunnel on the network.
- 5. Cotswold Water Park:** Many flooded gravel pits used for recreation and wildlife.
- 6. Blunsdon canal/rail interchange:** Proposed steam railway and canal interchange
- 7. Buscot:** National Trust village of Buscot and Buscot House and Park.
- 8. Kelmscott Manor:** The Cotswold retreat of William Morris.
- 11. Uffington White Horse:** Bronze Age, part of unique complex of ancient remains.
- 12. Coate Water:** Built by the Wilts & Berks Canal Company in the 1820s.
- 13. Steam Railway Museum and Village** Interesting exhibits and stories.