



Exploring nature on your doorstep Paths to Coate

Introduction

This map has been produced by Swindon Borough Council to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy the many green healthy spaces in and around Coate Water. The routes can be combined to offer longer walks and they take in a variety of terrain, where you can spot flora, fauna and wildlife. All routes are flat and accessible (but please note that there are steps as you reach the hospital boundary). Get out, get active and enjoy what Coate has to offer!

For more Swindon walking and cycling maps and information, contact or visit:

swindontravelchoices@swindon.gov.uk
www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk



Swindon Borough Council
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Walking: Tips & Health Benefits

Walking is a great low-intensity exercise!

- Brisk walking outdoors for 30mins a day increases lung health and capacity, and creates better blood circulation around the body.
- Walking kick-starts your nervous system; decreases anger, stress and hostility; boosts mood, lowers depression and improves mental well-being.
- Strengthens bones and keeps muscles functioning, keeping you younger and increasing your lifespan.
- Brisk 30 to 45 mins daily can protect from cold & flu, by increasing the immune cells in your body.
- Can help in stroke prevention amongst women.
- Helps lower blood sugar levels & risk of diseases like diabetes, obesity, and breast / colon cancer.
- Boosts brain function & thinking skills in people with dementia; helps reduce risk of age-related memory loss and help improve cognitive function.

Enjoy your walk - some useful tips

- Start slowly allowing your muscles to warm up and then gradually increase your speed.
- Try to complete 10,000 steps or more every day.
- Be comfortable with loose clothing and wear correct shoes with good heel and arch support.
- Walk with your friends, family or with the dog to socialise and connect with people.
- Walk to suit your level of fitness and age.
- Most of all have FUN – and feel great afterwards!

Washpool Wildlife Valley



4 Washpool Wildlife Valley

Situated in the north of Chiseldon, the secluded wildlife valley of Washpool is accessed via Sustrans Route 45 shown on this map (go south from Blue Route 4 on main map), or via Strouds Hill or Church Street, Chiseldon.

Visit www.facebook.com/WashpoolARP to see what is on offer to explore.

Around Coate Water



2 Coate Water Country Park is a 56-acre reservoir built in the 1820s as a headwater tank for the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal. In the 1970s a smaller lake was created as a flood storage lagoon, which became Wiltshire's first Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in 1976. Most of the site and all the water have been declared a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) in order to protect the wildlife and wildflower meadows.

There are several walks in and around the park, many of which are level and surfaced making them suitable for wheelchair users. It can get quite muddy to the south of the lake, so make sure you have appropriate footwear. Dogs are allowed in the country park, but restrictions apply to the nature reserve, children's play area, splash park, and golf course.



4 Curly Wurly bridge

This bridge crosses the M4, connecting Swindon to the North Wessex Downs on the southern side, is sometimes known as the "Helter Skelter" bridge for its resemblance to the fairground slide, but also known affectionately as the "Curly Wurly" bridge. The bridge provides a vital connection to Chiseldon and beyond for those on foot and non-motorised wheels.

2 The Coate Diving Platform

This was opened officially on 22nd June 1935; Miss Cicely Cousins (later the National Diving champion) performed the first dive from it. After pollution concerns, the lake was closed for swimming in 1958 leaving the diving board to the waterfowl. It was listed (Grade II) in 2013, being one of only four inter-war concrete diving platforms to survive to this day, and the sole example located in a lake.

Places to explore

5 Tree Collection

The Tree Collection is between Coate Water and the Polo Grounds behind Marlborough Road - it is laid out on two fields, the first being Spring Field, the second is the Old Oak Field. The Tree Collection is home to a selection of trees from all over the world.

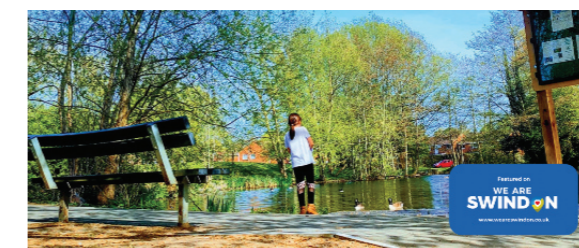


3 Croft Country Park

Just north of the Pipers Way end of Walk 3, Croft Country Park is a mixed woodland established in the mid-1990s. There are ponds, grassy banks, pathways, and footpath links to Great Copse. Croft is also the location of a 3 miles / 5 km mountain bike trail managed and maintained by volunteers from the MB Swindon Club. The waymarked trail has a blue family/beginner trail, and a more difficult red technical trail for more experienced cyclists.

2 South Swindon Parish Green Trail

(Also paths 1 and 3) Created in 2022 by South Swindon Parish Council for recreation and conservation, the South Swindon Green Trail roughly follows the boundary of the Parish. This circular trail links South Swindon's green areas and transport history. Download the maps from <https://southswindon-pc.gov.uk/south-swindon-green-trail/>



1 Shaftesbury Lake

Shaftesbury Lake can be found in-between Park South, Park North and Eldene, created as part of the post-war development of Park South. The lake supports a variety of wildlife.

2 Bird life

Birds known to be seen in Coate Water park and include – the marsh tit, kingfisher, great spotted woodpecker, Egyptian geese, great white egrets, great crested grebe, cormorants, swans, black swans and herons.



Things to do



6 Richard Jefferies Museum

The museum honours Richard Jefferies, a well-known Victorian writer, born at Coate in 1848. The museum is his childhood home. The site contains a 17th century thatched cottage bought by the Jefferies family in 1800, a 19th century three-storey farmhouse, outbuildings, gardens, a copse, an orchard and vegetable gardens. Inside, there is an extensive collection relating to Richard Jefferies.

6 Miniature Railway

Founded by the North Wilts Model Engineering Society in the early 1960s, this group of enthusiastic volunteers still runs the railway today. There are 10 locomotives that are used on the track, and the railway operates every Sunday all year round (weather and volunteers permitting). Wheelchair access on request.



2 Accessible Play Park

Opened in early 2023, the new play park has capacity for up to 100 children and offers a larger multi-play unit, an inclusive wheelchair roundabout, an inclusive multi-play seesaw along with swings, including one which is wheelchair accessible. Other fun features include slides, sensory bells, wind chimes and an accessible sand-pit.

4 North Wessex Downs AONB

An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally important, protected landscape. Skirting the southern edges of Swindon Borough, the North Wessex Downs AONB stretches over four counties. This is an area united by a single factor – chalk. On the old railway path to Chiseldon you can spot an array of wildlife.

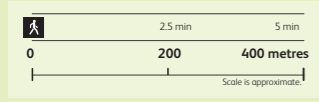
Did you identify the birds on this page? Answers below:
A: Kingfisher. B: Great Spotted Woodpecker. C: Blue Tit. (Pics: Graham Cox.)

- Local school
- Pharmacy / medical
- Community venue
- Library
- Post Office
- Bicycle parking
- Park
- Sports, Leisure, Play Area
- Local Shop
- Public House
- Café
- Museum
- Heritage site
- Parking
- Bicycle Crossing (Toucan)
- Toilets
- Disabled Access
- Changing Places

- Steps
- Public defibrillator
- Hospital (A&E)
- Selected bus stops
- Traffic lights for Pedestrian crossings
- Pedestrian crossing
- National Cycle Network
- Gradient (arrows point downhill)
- Cycle routes
- Footpaths
- Seating



- SUGGESTED WALKS**
- Orange route - Coate to Shaftesbury Lake - 0.8 miles
 - Red Route - Coate Circular - 1.75 miles
 - Yellow route - Coate to Croft Woods / Pipers Way - 1.5 miles
 - Blue Route - Coate to Curly Wurlly bridge (0.6 miles; on to Chiseldon - 2.2 miles)
 - Purple Route - Coate to the polo ground - 0.9 mile
 - Green Route - Coate to Great Western Hospital - 1.5 miles
Reduced accessibility beyond hospital boundary (steps)



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