

Cycle Route 2: Trains, Boats and Planes



This easy 16 mile ride takes you to one of the wonders of the canal building age – the Sapperton Tunnel on the Thames & Severn Canal. This is a watershed ride between the Thames and the Severn passing close to the source of the Thames near Kemble and the tunnel entrance near the Daneway pub takes you into the catchment of the River Severn. Apart from the steep climb back up from the Daneway, this is a level route which allows you to enjoy fine views of this part of the Cotswolds.

Grade: Easy

Time: 2-3 hours

Distance: 26km/16 miles

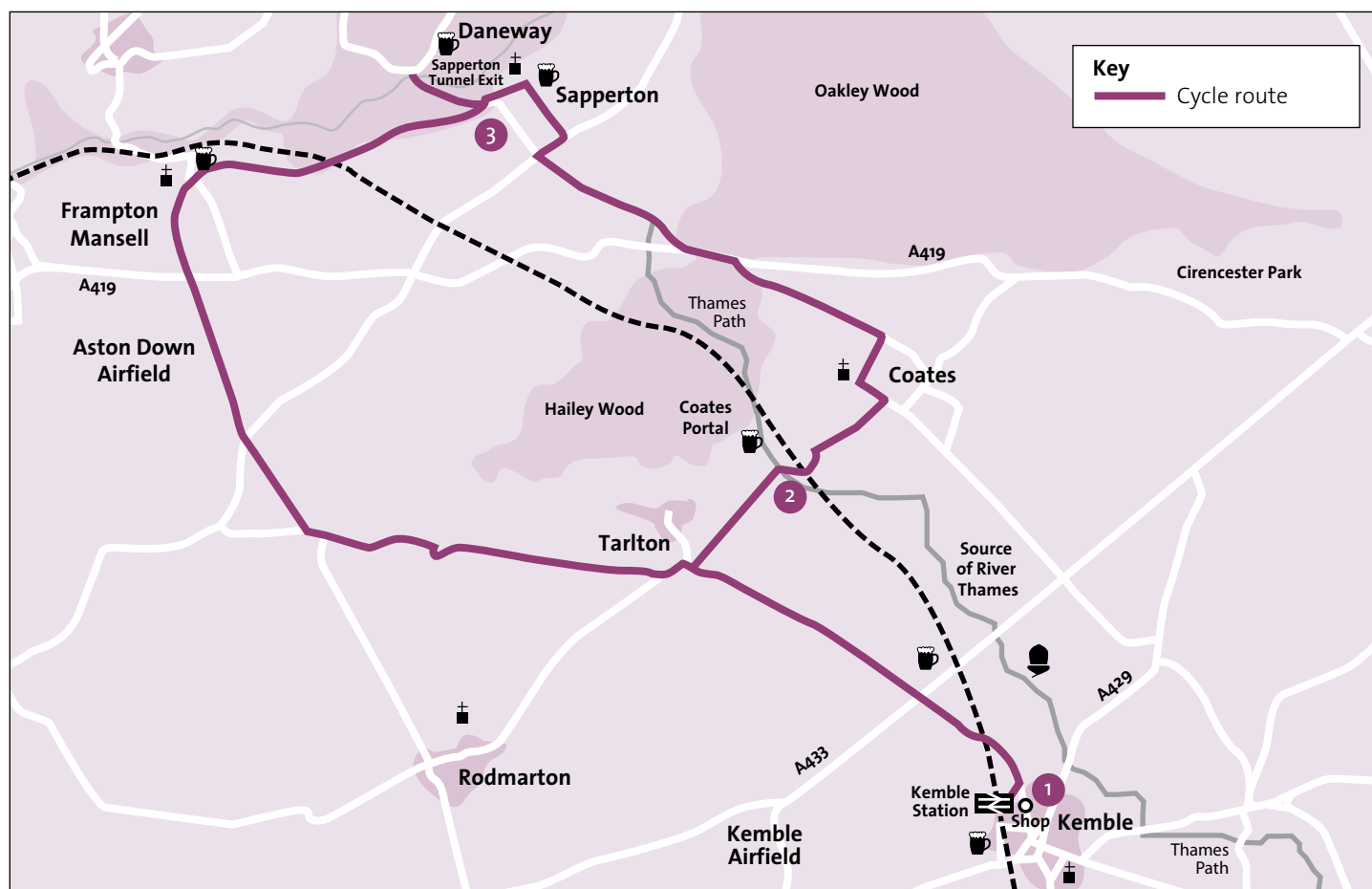
Attractions: Cotswolds villages, Coates Portal, Thames and Severn Canal

Stops/Pubs:

- The Tavern Inn, Kemble (01285 770216)
- The Tunnel House near Coates (01285 770280)
- The Bell at Sapperton (01285 760298)
- The Daneway Inn, Sapperton (01285 760297)
- The Crown Inn, Frampton Mansell (01285 760601)
- The Thames Head, nr Kemble (01285 770259)

Highlights along the route

- Sapperton Tunnel • Sapperton village
- Kemble Station • Aston Down Airfield
- Cotswold Airport



See page 2 for route description.

Cycle routes from Kemble Station

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Highlights

Sapperton Tunnel

The Tunnel House Inn was built about 1780 at the instigation of the Earl of Bathurst for the 200 to 300 miners who came mainly from the West Country and Derbyshire, to dig the nearby tunnel. In 1789, the two mile long Sapperton Tunnel was driven by candlelight from the Daneway through deep rock to this eastern portal. The tunnel linked the two most important lines of transport in the region, the River Thames and the Severn, by canal. This opened up new markets. Poles and 'leggers', walking along the tunnel wall or roof to move the barge were used to take the barges through the tunnel.

Sapperton Tunnel

Listed in the Domesday Book as Sapleton, the village of Sapperton has a population of just over 400 and is most famous for its canal tunnel and its connection with the Cotswold Arts and Crafts Movement in the early 20th century. There are many interesting buildings in Sapperton associated with the leading designers of the Art and Crafts Movement

Kemble Station

The station was opened by the Great Western Railway in 1882. Until the 1960s, the station was a junction with two branch lines to Cirencester and Tetbury. The old branch lines can still be seen today. Regular train services link Kemble with London and Cheltenham.

Aston Down Airfield

Originally known as Minchinhampton Aerodrome, this airfield was established in 1917 during the First World War and used as a base by the Australian Flying Corps. It became surplus to MOD requirements in 1981 and is now owned by Cotswold Gliding Club.

Cotswold Airport

Cotswold Airport, formerly Kemble Airfield, was built as a RAF training and maintenance base in the mid-1930s. It is now used for the storage and recycling of retired airliners, as well as flying schools, clubs and industry.



Route Description

- 1 Leave the main station car park located by the ticket office. Turn left at the road and go straight over at the crossroads, towards Tarlton. Before Tarlton Village Green, turn right to Coates. Turn off left at the Canal Bridge to visit the Tunnel House Inn and Coates Portal, or view Portal in the distance from the canal bridge.
- 2 Returning to the road, turn left to Coates. At the T-junction, turn left through Coates past the church to the A419. Turn left then right towards Sapperton. Turn right at the first crossroads. Take the first left into Sapperton village, bearing left near the church. Upon reaching the crossroads, turn right and head down the steep hill to the Daneway canal bridge. Walk along the track to the right to see the other portal to the Sapperton tunnel.
- 3 Return to the road and back up the hill towards Sapperton. At the crossroads turn right to Frampton Mansell. Go straight through the village until reaching the A419 – cross over here and pass close to Aston Airfield on the right then follow signs to Tarlton. In Tarlton, turn left at the water tower and then right at the village green. Follow this road back to Kemble station.