

HISTORY

Nottingham Castle: Building commenced in 1068, becoming an important landmark overseeing the River Trent crossing. During the next 300 years it was favoured by visiting English Monarchs, particularly Richard III. By the C16 it was in a ruinous state. In 1622 James I leased the building to the 7th Earl of Rutland who stripped the site for building materials and by 1642 the castle was uninhabitable. Following the civil war the remnants of the Castle were demolished. The Duke of Newcastle bought the site in 1663 and built a mansion which remained the main family dwelling until they built Clumber Park in 1770. In 1831 the mansion was gutted during the Reform Bill Riots. Restoration, supervised by the great Nottingham architect TC Hine, commenced in 1875 and in 1878 it was re-opened as the first UK Local Authority funded art gallery.

The Park: Created as a deer park from the late 11th century, Kings hunted here but by the 1770s the Park was largely abandoned by the Duke of Newcastle. The citizens of Nottingham grazed livestock and the walk to Lenton was a popular trade and leisure route. In 1827 the 4th Duke of Newcastle commissioned the influential architect Peter Frederick Robinson to plan residential development. By 1832 fifty houses had been built. In 1854 The Duke's son hired TC Hine to work on the building of some 200 houses, centred round the contours of the land from Derby Road & the Castle to the boundary of the Nottingham Canal. Hine prepared a modified plan and the template for further development was set. An upsurge in activity between 1870 and 1895 heralded the building of many imposing 'villas' for wealthy industrialists, designed by prominent architects. The estate was brought by Oxford University in 1938 who sold it to current owners Nottingham Park Estate Limited in 1986 and is now designated a Conservation Area.

Lenton: Mentioned in the Domesday Book, Lenton was originally a village separated from Nottingham by open fields and the Park. Little remains of Lenton Priory, the most powerful monastic house in Nottinghamshire, founded by Cluniacs in 1105. Lenton Road, Park Road and Sherwin Road are part of the ancient 'foot road' from Beeston to Nottingham, used for trade and leisure, with ale houses and coffee shops meeting the needs of its users. The enclosure of fields resulted in the eventual envelopment of the old village with the wider city area. In 1877 Nottingham extended its boundaries to include Lenton. By the late 19th century New Lenton, east of the railway (opened 1849) was being developed.

Penn Avenue Maisonettes built in 1926 by Sir Jesse Boot:

In 1920 Boot sold his drugs company for £2.5million, bought the Highfields Estate (site of University of Nottingham main campus) and set about improving road links between Beeston and Nottingham. This resulted in 35 houses on Castle Boulevard being demolished and the tenants needed rehousing. Not wanting to delay the build, to rehouse the tenants Boot used his own money to build 48 maisonettes on Penn Avenue but few tenants chose to live in them; the rent being nearly twice as much as local rents. During the Second World War, the front lawn was used to house a bomb shelter, complete with toilets and running water. After the war, the lawn was converted into allotments. In 1957, the Council bought the maisonettes and the allotments were replaced by a new playground. The design of the maisonettes is reminiscent of the London tenement blocks and remains a rare example of this architectural style in Nottingham (contribution from the Lenton Local History Society).

The Nottingham & Beeston Canal: Running from the Erewash in Langley Mill to the River Trent at Trent Bridge, built during the 1790's by engineers William Jessop and James Green. The opening of the Grantham Canal in 1797 ensured an impressive integrated trade route until they were closed in 1936 & 1937. The recreational value of the City canal area was recognised in the 1970s. Castle Marina and Retail Park was built during the 1980's. New residential developments have taken place on Castle Boulevard whilst commercial and retail premises have expanded on the far side of Tinker's Leen.

The Lenton and Park Walk



Circular walk includes Nottingham Castle, Lenton, the Park Estate and Nottingham and Beeston canal.

Walk No. 3

Cover images, Statue of Robin Hood outside the Nottingham Castle, the Castle Gatehouse, and Canalside.

This easy circular walk includes the ancient pedestrian route from Beeston to Nottingham, Lenton, The Castle and The Park Estate, interesting architecture, local landmarks and Canal.

THE FACTS

Area: Lenton and Park, Nottingham City

Distance: Approximately 2.5 miles (4 km)

Duration: 2 hours

Maps: As leaflet or OS Explorer Map 260

Travel Information: The castle is a short walk from Market Square and bus and tram stops in the city centre (www.travelineeastmidlands.co.uk / tele 0871 2002233)

Starting Point: Nottingham Castle or Gregory Street tram stop (point F)

Refreshments: Many cafes and bars on route.

THE ROUTE

A. Walk to the right of the Castle Gatehouse down Lenton Road, flanked by high walls and cutting through what was once the outer moat of the Castle. It was in this area in 1642 that Charles I raised his standard to rally royalist troops at the start of the Civil War. Note the Public Footpath sign by the steps to King Charles Street. Proceed downhill along Lenton Road, passing many large dwellings of distinctive architectural merit. At the bottom of the hill, is Ogle Drive (on your left) and Huntingdon Drive (on your right), and as you approach the next intersection of Tattershall Drive (to your right), Park Drive (half right) and Peveril Drive (to your left) you begin to climb uphill, still on Lenton Road. At this point cross over Lenton Road using the path over the small roundabout.

B. Check the views from the top of Park Ravine on your left. Pass Hermitage Walk and Rock Drive, which has a small gated path at the side leading to Castle Boulevard (automated gate open between 06.00hrs – 23.00hrs).

C. Lenton Avenue on your right marks the western boundary of The Park Estate. Keep left with the brick garages on your right and you'll see the Public Footpath sign as you enter Park Road.

D. The first signs of commercial and retail activity now become evident. Head towards the roundabout and cross Castle Boulevard at the Toucan Crossing and continue ahead into Sherwin Road. Go under the railway bridge and you will see Sherwin Road Community Garden to your left after the bridge. Castle Boulevard was opened in the 1880's as a level route from Lenton to Nottingham.

E. At the end of Sherwin Road is, to your right, Lenton War Memorial and the Albert Ball Memorial Homes, commemorating Captain Albert Ball VC, a fighter pilot killed in World War 1. Commissioned by his father and opened in 1922, these initially housed widows and mothers of Lenton serviceman. On your left is The Ear Foundation building. At the T junction turn left into Gregory Street. Cross over Penn Avenue on your left with Leen Gate on your right. Pass the White Hart public house, in the eighteenth century a popular coffee house, and turn left at the traffic lights, using the Pedestrian Crossing to cross over Abbey Bridge Road and continue along Gregory Street. On your right is Lenton Priory Park and Church.

F. You could start the walk from the Gregory Street tram stop. Using the Pedestrian Crossing cross Gregory Street and turn left, over the canal then take the stepped path onto the canal towpath, sign posted for The City Centre 1½ miles (via The Big Track).

G. Continue along the towpath and after approx. 250 yards (229 metres) pass beneath a Railway Bridge (Bridge 13) and you will see the beginning of Castle Marina on your right and further along the "The Big Fish" on the opposite side of the bank (The Struggler). Continuing under the Modern Bridge (12) go over the footbridge beside the "Waters' Edge" bar, Tinkers Leen is on your right as you walk beneath the wooden footbridge (11). One of the most impressive buildings is New Castle House, a sleek white industrial factory designed in the 1930's. 200 yards (183 metres) further down the towpath take the wooden bridge over the weir which feeds into the River Leen through a culvert to the River Trent. You will see the Navigation public house by the lock gates on the opposite bank next to Bridge 10, a fine example of Victorian Ironwork.

H. Exit the towpath here and turn left, past the Navigation public house and the Irish Centre to the Pedestrian Crossing at the T junction of Wilford Street and Castle Boulevard. Cross over Castle Boulevard, turn left and then right up Castle Road, passing The Trip to Jerusalem (some say the oldest pub in the country), the Castle Rock wall and the Statue of Robin Hood on your left and a cluster of hosteleries and restaurants providing sustenance and refreshment towards the Castle Gatehouse, back to point A.

MAP

