

POINTS OF INTEREST

Clifton Hall and Family The Hall may have originated from a watchtower overlooking the Trent. A more substantial building existed in the 16th century, which was altered c1632. It was remodelled c1779 by John Carr of York with further alterations in the 19th century. From the churchyard you see the 18th century brick built colonnaded east frontage flanked by two wings. It was the country house of the Clifton family and their descendents until 1947. For 18 years it housed Clifton Hall Girls Grammar School, and then Nottingham Trent University School of Education. It is now in private ownership and has been subdivided into apartments.

The estates of Wilford and Clifton were granted to Sir Gervase de Clifton in 1272. He was descended from Alvaredus, a Norman knight, who was appointed warden of Nottingham Castle in the time of William the Conqueror. A later descendent, Gervase 'the Great' was made a baronet in 1611. The last direct descendent died in 1869, but subsequent descendents, including the Bruce family, took on the Clifton name. The family controlled the village until 1947 when the land was purchased by Nottingham City Council (known then as the Corporation).

Clifton Grove Elms were planted in the 1690s to flank the main carriage drive to the Hall from Fairham Brook. As a result of Dutch Elm disease, all were removed and replaced by Horse Chestnuts and other species. Within the woods are the remains of a shooting lodge and fountain. The Grove features in the legend of the Fair Maid of Clifton, punished for her unfaithfulness, in a poem by Henry Kirke White.

Clifton Bridge Clifton Bridge was built in 1958, widened in the early 1970s and improved again in 1995.

Clifton Estate In 1945 Nottingham had an acute shortage of houses, and limited building land within its boundary. In 1947, Nottingham City Council purchased over 900 acres (over 360 hectares) of farmland adjacent to Clifton Village. In 1950, after two public inquiries, planning permission was granted to develop the site. The first residents moved here in 1951. In the same year, the City boundary was extended to the south to incorporate 2287 acres (926 hectares), including the villages of Clifton and Wilford.

Clifton Central Park and Playing Fields From the outset it was recognised that open space for sport and recreation would be required within Clifton estate. Two major parks were created. While Clifton Playing Fields was laid out primarily for sport and recreation, Clifton Central Park (known by many as the Flower Park) was laid out with a very different character, with flower and shrub beds and tree-lined walks. There are over 500 trees in Clifton Central Park and over 40 different species. These include Oak, Beech, Ash, Birch, Maple, Pine, Lime, Cherry and Crab Apple.

THE FACTS

Area:	Clifton, Nottingham City
Distance:	5 miles (8 km) or shorter walk 4 miles (6.5km) (distances quoted are rounded off)
Duration:	About 2.5 hours or shorter walk about 2 hours
Maps:	As Leaflet or OS Landranger 129 / OS Explorer Map 260
Travel Information:	Nottingham City Transport Navy Line Bus or Tram to Clifton South - get off at Clifton Centre, Southchurch Drive (see www.nctx.co.uk / www.thetram.net)
Terrain:	Woodland and riverside paths, pavements, playing fields and parks. Mainly level ground with one moderate slope and a few steps. Parts can be muddy. Parts unsuitable for wheelchairs and mobility scooters
Starting point:	Clifton Leisure Centre, Southchurch Drive, NG11 8AB (point A)
Refreshments:	Clifton Leisure Centre has drink vending machines and toilets. There are other eating and drinking facilities in Clifton centre

Clifton Walk



Circular walk including the River Trent, Fairham Brook, Clifton Estate and Clifton Village.

Walk No. 4

Cover images, Tram at Southchurch Drive, Clifton Central Park and Clifton Hall

THE ROUTE

A From the bus/tram stops, walk to the Leisure Centre and cross Southchurch Drive. Follow the curved path next to the beech hedge, taking the left fork through trees. Cross the road to Glapton Lane. This was once the village lane of the small settlement of Glapton and you will see older houses amongst the 1950s development. Keep to the footpath on its left, which eventually wanders through mature trees. Beyond Glapton Academy, turn right across a bridge, then left, to see the old village smithy and blacksmith's house, on your left. Cross the busy A453 "Remembrance Way" using the pedestrian crossing on your left, onto Clifton Village Green.

B The old village of Clifton, a Conservation Area, was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. The early 18th century Dovecote, now with war memorial plaques, stands in the centre of the Village Green. The largest dovecote in the area, it contains 2,300 nest boxes. To the right, the Village Hall, with a bell turret, date-stone and Coat of Arms was once the village school built in 1871, with an adjacent schoolhouse. Residences converted from the George Wells Almshouses of 1709 are hidden behind trees on the edge of the Village Green.

C Walk along Village Road, passing the early 19th century Old Rectory and Coach House on your left. Opposite, one of the early 20th century buildings were once a reading room and shop. Other notable buildings include 15th century timber framed and brick cottages with thatched roofs, with others dating back to 1450. A farmhouse dating from 1319 contains an important timber framed hall, which was added to in the 17th century, with further changes in later centuries. The initials and date relate to the remodelling by Thomas and John or Jane Lambert in 1707. A number of buildings are inscribed with the initials of Hervey Bruce (later Clifton), inheritor of Clifton Hall in the late 19th century.

D Turn right into Holgate an ancient 'hollow way' leading to the River Trent. Behind the Village Green to your left, are Home Farm and the old stables of Clifton Hall. Beyond, is the Church of St Mary the Virgin. Take a look at this mainly fourteenth century church, which was founded much earlier. There is a rare pre-reformation crucifix on the west gable of the roof and interesting gargoyles. Note the private entrance from the church to Clifton Hall, which is best seen from the churchyard.

E Retrace your steps across Holgate to the River Users Car Park. The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust information board tells you more about three important wildlife sites. You enter one of these via the footpath at the far end of the car park, and keep heading straight on. This is Clifton Grove, on an outcrop of Keuper Marl forming a cliff above the Trent. Walking and picnicking in this natural beauty spot was a favourite outing for Nottingham folk in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and is still popular today with walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

Through the woodland on your left you have views across the Trent Valley. Keep to the wide upper footpath (and permissive bridleway), ignoring the paths to the left. Nottingham Trent University Clifton Campus is on the right. Continue for just over half a mile (800 metres) and the footpath gently descends and meets the bridleway along the river. For the longer walk, continue straight ahead with the river on your left towards Wilford. (For the shorter walk, at point **F** turn left and follow the bridleway with the river on your right for about half a mile. At point **E** turn left up the bridleway to Holgate and Clifton Village. Head along Holgate and bear right onto Nethergate towards the Village Green then retrace your steps to Clifton Centre. At the bottom of Holgate at point **E**, if you have time, follow the bridleway signs to Holme Pit pond, a Site of Special Scientific Interest).

F Heading towards Wilford, the hills give way to arable fields and pylons, on your right. The bridleway is bounded by hedgerows and trees with views across the Trent Valley. Continue for around half a mile (800 metres), before you reach Clifton Bridge, cross a footbridge over Fairham Brook, where it enters the Trent. Leave the river by heading towards the petrol station, passing a car park. Cross the road, by turning left to the pedestrian crossing, opposite the Christadelphian Church. Turn right, past the petrol station and garage. Follow the path to the left and go through the short subway. Turn right and head for the footpath sign, around 140 yards (130 metres) away, behind the phone kiosk on the corner of the road where it turns left opposite the roundabout.

G Take the steps down and follow the path (Silverdale Walk) along Fairham Brook, bounded by hedgerows and woodland. Some of the grassland to your left is being managed to encourage wildlife. After about a mile (1600 metres) you come to a T junction, turn right and cross the footbridge over the brook. Turn left and follow the brook. At the tram crossing ignore the path to your left but carefully cross the tracks, signed to Clifton centre. Take the path on your left, which runs alongside a small wood, to Clifton Playing Fields. Keep to the left side of the playing fields and rejoin the brook after about a quarter of a mile (400 metres).

H The playing fields for Farnborough Academy are to your right. The path skirts through stands of mature trees. After about half a mile (800 metres) Nethergate stream merges into the brook. Cross the footbridge and turn right. Walk to the right of the skate park and through the gate onto Farnborough Road.

I Cross the road, and walk along the tree-lined path keeping the stream on your right, towards Clifton Central Park. Walk into the Park, after about 110 yards (100 metres) take the left fork path, passing an outdoor gym on the right. The park contains many mature trees and different wildlife habitats. There is an information board near the exit. You arrive back at the bus/tram stops and Leisure Centre on Southchurch Drive, point **A**.

MAP

