

## 11A. River Leen & Nottingham Canal Appendix – Further Information on Sites along the Walk

The walk routes are drawn using Open Street Maps from the internet <https://www.openstreetmap.org>, with some use of Google Maps <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-e&q=google+maps>, and old maps are from Old Maps Online <https://www.oldmapsonline.org/en/England> and National Library of Scotland, Ordnance Survey Maps <https://maps.nls.uk/os/6inch-england-and-wales/>

Facts, descriptions, old photographs and historical information used in the walks are from sources openly available on the internet. The sources are recorded with links – readers can use the links (available at time of writing – 2024/5) to obtain further information.

### 1. Clifton Colliery Road

This photo shows a steam train going along the Clifton Colliery Branch line which linked the colliery to the Great Central Railway as shown on this 1899 map



### 2. Victoria Primary School

Victoria Primary School opened in Sept. 2016 replacing Riverside Primary School which apparently opened in 2005. There used to be another school here – but not in the exact same location. As the 1880 map below shows, there used to be a bleach works opposite where the current school is, with allotments on much of what is now the school playing field. By 1899, the bleach works were gone and more housing built along a new street – Hawthorne Street – with a school built (Bosworth School) at the junction with Bosworth Road (the origin of today's name for Bosworth Walk and now part replaced by Ainsworth Drive).



1880



1899

Bosworth infant and junior school was still open in 1973 but it was demolished in 1976 as part of the redevelopment of the Meadows (thanks to Janine Tanner for photos on facebook)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/20722646442/posts/10157931031746443/>



### 3. Birdcage Walk

I have been unable to discover why this path is so named. Birdcage Walk is the name of a march composed in 1951 by Arnold Steck. It is also the name of a 2017 novel by Helen Dunmore, although here the "Birdcage Walk" in question is in Clifton, Bristol. The most famous Birdcage Walk runs along the southern side of St James Park in London. It's so named because King James I had a particular penchant for exotic birds, and kept many of them in cages and aviaries lining this street. Perhaps this is the link, as it was James I's son, Charles I who came to Nottingham Castle in 1642 and raised his royal standard to demonstrate his authority.

### 4. River Leen

At the start of Birdcage Walk where it meets the junction of Crossgate Drive and Queens Drive, the River Leen is in a deep channel. At this point it goes under Queens Drive and into the River Trent.

It stays in a man-made channel alongside Birdcage Walk.



Wikipedia provides a good history of the River Leen - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River\\_Leen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_Leen) - The name Leen comes from the Celtic word meaning "lake" or "pool" and the river gave its name to Lenton, 'ton' being the Saxon word for village. The 15 mile route of the River Leen starts as a series of springs at the foot of the Robin Hood Hills just outside Annesley and joins the Trent next to Riverside Way. Its route through Nottingham has changed over the centuries, as described by Wikipedia:

From Lenton onwards the course of the Leen has been quite radically altered on a number of occasions, although the river's present course probably follows a route close to its original natural course. The first change to the river's course came in the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries, when the river was diverted to pass beneath the cliff on which Nottingham Castle was situated before flowing into the Trent near Trent Bridge, thus providing the town of Nottingham with a more plentiful supply of water. This alignment near the Castle is shown in this drawing by Thomas Hammond.



Nottingham Castle before restoration, showing the River Leen, 1870

The next change came with the opening of the Nottingham Canal which in some places occupied the course of the Leen, with the river being diverted along the route of the present Canal Street (this stretch was soon culverted by the Nottingham Borough Engineer).

Further changes came with the construction of Castle Boulevard along the foot of the Castle cliff in 1884. With insufficient room for river, canal and road, the river was diverted into the canal at Lenton and the road built on the course of the former river. After flowing some distance along the canal, the river passed over a small weir into the Tinker's Leen (where the modern Courts complex is now situated) and so into the Trent just downstream of Trent Bridge. However over time, and as the river's catchment area became more built up with faster run-off times, flooding became a problem, with particularly heavy flooding in 1960. By this stage, the main line of the canal



between Lenton and Langley Mill had been abandoned, although the stretch through Nottingham remains in use as part of the Trent navigation.

This flooding led to a further diversion, which would largely divert the river back to its original pre-eleventh-century course. The river was first diverted into the southernmost section of the abandoned canal, between Derby Road and the operational canal at Lenton. It was then taken under the operational canal in a syphon, before entering a brand new channel that took it to join the Trent near the Riverside Way/ Queens Drive junction.



The River Leen goes under the Nottingham Canal

## 5. King's Meadow

The Meadows was originally land belonging to Nottingham Castle and known as the King's Meadow – which is now the name of this nature reserve which was created in 1992 as a receptor site for flora and fauna that would otherwise have been destroyed by development on the former Wilford Power Station site.

When the power station was decommissioned in the 1960, a layer of pulverised fuel ash (PFA) was spread on the site. Nature being nature, the area became colonised by two species of orchid; common spotted and southern marsh, which then pollinated and produced hybrids. Other species typical of sparsely-vegetated, man-made sites also colonised creating a very unusual post-industrial grassland habitat of high conservation value.

When the power station land was earmarked for development the Nottingham Wildlife Trust headed a campaign to save the habitat and its flora. As a result, in 1995 large sections of vegetated ash turf were successfully moved from the power station site to the newly-created Kings' Meadow reserve.

<https://studylib.net/doc/8490060/kings-meadow---nottinghamshire-wildlife-trust>

## 6. NET bridge

I had retired from my role as Director NET soon after signing the contract for Phase 2 but it was good to watch the construction process, including, in February 2013, the bridge over the railway at Lenton Lane. The main structure was driven into position by four 40-wheel self-propelled modular transporters. They drove the bridge across the railway and lifted it up onto concrete supports either side of the tracks. To avoid disruption to main line trains the 28 hour operation was planned to coincide with scheduled Network Rail engineering works between Derby and Nottingham.

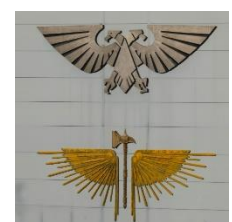


## 7. Games Workshop (Warhammer World)

Warhammer World is the home of the Warhammer miniature games, Games Workshop's global headquarters and visitor centre, a haven for collectors and gamers from across the globe!

The site is already large and the company is expecting to open a new site on the other side of Lenton Lane in July 2025 and it has also secured planning permission for a fourth factory at the main site on Willow Road, which will be completed in summer 2026, and another nearby site for future expansion.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/jan/14/warhammer-games-workshop-uk-factory-amazon-tv-nottingham>



## 8. Trent Vineyard Church

This welcoming church holds lively and progressive Christian services with live bands staged in contemporary surroundings.



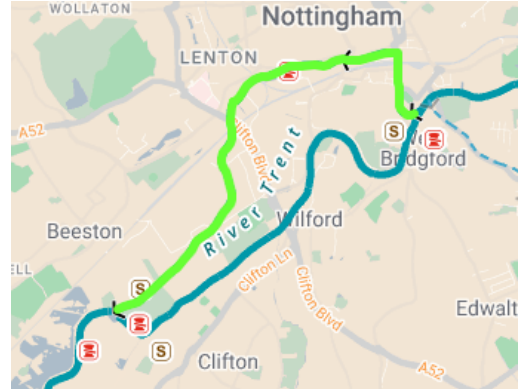
## 9. Nottingham & Beeston Canal

The canal was once part of a much longer route, which is now derelict. The present-day stretch remains a vital link for boaters, allowing them to bypass an unnavigable section of the River Trent.

The coalfields of Nottinghamshire brought great wealth to the region, but transport by the local roads was slow and expensive. As Canal Mania swept the country in the 1790s, the citizens of Nottingham resolved not to miss out, and planned a new waterway from the city to Langley Mill. There, it would connect with the Cromford Canal, which was already busy with coal traffic.

The canal opened in 1796, 15 miles long with 20 locks - most of which were grouped into a flight at Wollaton. The geography of the waterways in central Nottingham was, and is, complex. The city was built on the River Trent, but river navigation immediately upstream of the city had always been difficult. While the Nottingham Canal was being constructed, the Trent Navigation Company built an artificial canal - the Beeston Cut - to bypass the river from Trent Lock to Lenton. There, it met with the Nottingham Canal, which therefore became part of the river through-route. Two hundred years later, this is the only part of the Nottingham Canal to survive.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/canals-and-rivers/nottingham-and-beeston-canal>



## 10. Trevethick's Boat Yard

Trevethick's boat yard, the oldest in Nottingham, first opened for business just as the canal was completed in 1796. The yard was bought by Thomas Trevethick in 1903 who had started his business in Gainsborough in 1895, but boat building was already a family tradition. Thomas's father had worked on sailing ship construction as a mast and block maker in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Also, earlier in the Trevethick family tree is one Richard Trevethick, the Cornish engineer, pioneer builder of high-pressure steam engines and 'father of the locomotive'.



In addition to boat building and repair, the yard operated over two coal-fired pleasure steamers, making trips to Trent Lock and back, price one shilling and three pence. Also there were canoes and rowing boats for hire.



A Trevethick cruiser steams past the boatyard c.1908.  
Photograph Courtesy of Tom Trevethick.

The boat hire business finished in the 1970s but the repair work continues at the yard.

Read more in 'The Lenton Listener' Issue 13, July-August 1981

[https://www.lentontimes.co.uk/images/gallery/gregory\\_street/gregory\\_st\\_listener\\_13.htm](https://www.lentontimes.co.uk/images/gallery/gregory_street/gregory_st_listener_13.htm)



## 11. Robin Hood Line

The majority of the current Robin Hood Line re-uses the former Midland Railway (MR) route from Nottingham to Worksop. Following the Beeching cuts of the 1960s, the line became freight-only and a section north of Annesley was removed in order to save the costs of maintaining a tunnel. The line from Nottingham remained intact as far as Newstead, where it served the now closed Newstead Colliery.

The plans for the Robin Hood Line (RHL) were initiated by a small team at Nottinghamshire County Council. It was vital in the interest of keeping costs down to make as much use of the existing infrastructure as possible but the tunnel did have to be re-excavated; fortunately the original structure was in good condition. The new passenger service from Nottingham to Newstead opened in 1993, Bulwell station in 1994 and the extension to Mansfield Woodhouse in 1995, with Kirkby-in-Ashfield station opening in 1996. The through passenger route from Nottingham to Worksop opened in 1998.

In 2004, the development of the Nottingham Express Transit tramway required the section of RHL between Bulwell and Hucknall to be converted to single track with NET running alongside.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin\\_Hood\\_Line](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Hood_Line)

## 12. Castle Marina

Built in 1980s the Marina is, according to an on-line interview ([www.leftlion.co.uk/read/2019/september/life-on-nottingham-canal](http://www.leftlion.co.uk/read/2019/september/life-on-nottingham-canal)) "home to a mix of semi-retired folk, young professionals looking to minimise housing costs and, with a wry smile, what Robin calls 'single men' [i.e. divorced]."



## 13. Tinkers Leen

The Tinkers Leen is a tiny stream which takes overflow from the canal and then veers away, mainly through underground pipes under London Road, Eastcroft Depot and the Jimmy Sirrel Stand at Notts County FC and eventually joins the River Trent.



## 14. Castle Meadow Campus

Completed in September 1994 these distinctive buildings employ natural ventilation. The design employs the thermal mass of the concrete to cool the building at night. The main Amenity Building has a fabric roof suspended from four raking steel masts.



Until recently the site was occupied by HMRC (HM Revenue and Customs), now situated in the Unity Square building near Nottingham Station. The University of Nottingham acquired the site in late 2021 and announced that:

With the aim to 'grow some place extraordinary', Castle Meadow is set to become the University of Nottingham's home of enterprise. Once completed, this campus will be a collaborative space between businesses and research, inspiration and innovation. The campus will interact with the following groups daily:

For students studying on the campus, it will provide a nurturing environment to apply the skills learnt in the lecture theatre to real-world situations.

For businesses, its central location promotes partnering and growth via co-working areas and innovation labs.

For the local communities, it will encourage interaction on the campus through research projects, local initiatives and events.

<https://www.hopkins.co.uk/projects/workplace/inland-revenue-centre/>

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/policyengagementblog/castle-meadow-campus>

## 15. Duke of Newcastle's Wharf

As trade along the canal developed, sailmakers and timber merchants established waterside premises and lived in the Castle Boulevard area.

This painting 'Nottingham Castle', by Victorian artist Samuel Oscoff, shows a river barge unloading timber at what the Duke of Newcastle's Wharf.

The 'Duke of Newcastle' was Henry Pelham-Clinton, 4th Duke of Newcastle who was Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire from 1809 to 1839.



After the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the present 'Ducal Mansion' (Nottingham Castle) was built by William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle and completed by his son, Henry Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Newcastle.

With the industrialisation of the town the mansion's attraction gradually diminished and by 1750 the Duke's visits had come to an end. Converting the building into apartments, the Duke rented them off to wealthy tenants. Later used as a boarding school, the mansion slowly declined and the gardens were let off as allotments.

The last residents quit the building in 1829 and it remained unoccupied. By this time great changes had come to Nottingham as part of the Industrial Revolution, which left Nottingham with the reputation of having the worst slums

in the British Empire outside India. When residents of these slums rioted in 1831, in protest against the Duke of Newcastle's opposition to the Reform Act 1832 they burned down the mansion.

For many years the blackened and gutted shell was to look down over Nottingham until in the 1870s the Town Council resolved that the Castle and its grounds would be an ideal site for a Museum of Fine Art which was opened in 1878.

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/history/gallery/memories-of-castle-boulevard-1900875>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nottingham\\_Castle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nottingham_Castle)

## 16. New Castle House

This art deco style building was originally called Viyella House. Designed by Nottingham architect Frank Broadhead, it was built in the early 1930s as offices for William Hollins & Co. The name Viyella is based on the unusually-named valley road, Via Gellia (the A5012) near Matlock, where in 1890 Hollins & Co acquired a mill used for the early production of Viyella, originally a soft, light, flannel-like fabric made of a blend of lamb's wool and fine cotton.

The clock on the front of the building has a set of chimes that play a different tune each day of the week – one of these can be heard on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNd6RPUOT9Q>



[Viyella House, in the 1950s](#)

## 17. Castle Lock

Castle Lock is one of three working locks along the canal

The canal was an important part of the industrial life of the city with many buildings alongside it as shown in this photo c1900s.

This is looking west from the Wilford Street Canal Bridge area. The overflow of canal water went into the Tinkers Leen on the left. On the right are buildings on Castle Boulevard. The buildings on the extreme right were once part of a paper works (replaced by the Viyella factory).



This and other old photos of Castle Boulevard are from the Nottingham Post website

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/local-news/gallery/39-pictures-castle-boulevard-past-3393988>

This picture by Thomas William Hammond shows the Nottingham Canal, Navigation Inn and Wilford Road Bridge in 1873.

<https://picturenottingham.co.uk/image-library/image-details/poster/ntgm016046/posterid/ntgm016046.html>



## 18. British Waterways Building

The 6 storey Grade II Listed British Waterways Building, formerly known as the Trent Navigation Company warehouse, was built in around 1919 for the storage and loading of goods and materials onto canal barges for transportation across the country. More recently, the building was converted for leisure use as part of the 1996 Castle Wharf development (behind the British Waterways building). A gym and the Wetherspoon pub The Company Inn were based within the building but have both closed, as has the Glee Comedy Club.

Planning permission was given in September 2022 to convert the landmark building into 95 apartments.



## 19. Heron

The Heron is by Michelle Reader and is made from reclaimed Raleigh bike parts and metal objects found in the canal including a shopping trolley, lawnmower, picnic bench and beer barrel hoops.



## 20. Castle Rock Brewery

When Chris Holmes first opened the Old Kings Arms in Newark in the 1970s he wanted “to prove a point and to break monopolies in Newark, as there was no real ale available. Having a simple free house in the middle of a town with a row of hand pumps serving real ales was a revolutionary concept then”. He made his point successfully and in 1977 he set up the Tynemill company which grew to 12 pubs by the time it began brewing its own beers in 1997. In 1998, the company transformed into Castle Rock.

The brewery was established as a partnership with Bramcote Brewery and opened next door to the Vat and Fiddle on Queensbridge Road close to Nottingham railway station. The Vat and Fiddle became the ‘Brewery Tap’ and “thirteen cask beers greet you on entering the Vat, showcasing the largest available range of Castle Rock beers. They are joined by guest beers from local and national breweries, and an award-winning assortment of ciders. You’ll also find a great selection of beers in keg, bottle and can, alongside a full menu of wines, spirits and soft drinks”.

The company was catapulted into the spotlight when Harvest Pale was crowned Supreme Champion Beer of Britain in 2010. There are now over twenty pubs in the Castle Rock extended family and it brews a huge variety of skilfully crafted beers. In 2024 Castle Rock was named Pub Group of the Year at the National Pub & Bar Awards.

Chris Holmes is a former chairman of CAMRA - the Campaign For Real Ale, and the company state that “Running great pubs and brewing great beer is still our humble life’s mission”.

<https://www.castlerockbrewery.co.uk>

<https://leftlion.co.uk/features/2007/04/chris-holmes-interview-castle-rock-tynemill-camra-founder/>

In November 2024 it was reported that the brewery building is up for sale and the brewery may relocate.

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/nottingham-news/castle-rock-brewery-building-sale-9693193>



## 21. Karlsruhe House

Karlsruhe House was built in the 1800s. It is named to reflect the link between Nottingham and the German city of Karlsruhe. The union between the two cities began on 26 July, 1969, and the twinning has led to many joint cultural activities and successful exchanges involving schools, colleges and universities. Nottingham and Karlsruhe celebrated 50 years together in 2019.



When the idea of creating a tram network in Nottingham was first explored in the 1990s, we benefitted from the experience of Karlsruhe, which had a well-established tram system, and we made visits to learn how they integrated the trams into the city. This assistance is reflected in the naming in 2014 of the Karlsruhe Friendship Bridge over Nottingham train station to connect it with the city's new extended tram lines.

<https://www.mynottinghamnews.co.uk/cheers-nottingham-and-karlsruhe-celebrate-50-years-together/>

## 22. Queen's Walk

Queen's Walk follows an ancient pathway that ran from the River Trent ferry crossing at Wilford into the centre of Nottingham. In early times it crossed wet and boggy ground and its route was marked by white posts.

The path was laid out formally in 1850 and named Queen's Walk in commemoration of Queen Victoria's visit to Nottingham in 1843. In 1927, when the walkway was opened to traffic, the name was changed to Queen's Drive but reverted to its original name following the redevelopment of the area in the 1970s and 1980s.



c1920

The Walk is characterised by its avenue of Lime trees and when this route was chosen for the NET Phase Two line to Clifton it was recognised that some trees would have to be felled. Those that were cut down have been given to the community for reuse and the Meadows Tree Project was formed. Twelve of the trees have been carved into 'Story Poles' that now line Queen's Walk (except one near the Arkwright Walk/Meadows Way junction). The story pole carvers worked with over 200 people of all ages to create these works of art, which are themed around the activities and communities past and present in the immediate neighbourhood. Other felled trees were given to other woodcarving projects, while replacement lime trees have been planted on Queen's Walk to maintain the avenue.



Queen's Walk tram works looking North, Dec 2013

[http://www.ournottinghamshire.org.uk/page\\_id\\_333.aspx?path=0p31p39p344p67p154p386p](http://www.ournottinghamshire.org.uk/page_id_333.aspx?path=0p31p39p344p67p154p386p)  
<https://www.geograph.org.uk/snippet/11540>

Near Arkwright  
Walk/Meadows Way

Welcome



11 poles are located along Queens Walk, from north to south

Queen Victoria



Youth



Green



Sport  
OK – my bias here!



Friendship



Faith



Industry



Old Meadows



Transport



Armed Forces



River



In 2015 Lilian Greenwood MP unveiled the last statue, representing Queen Victoria.

<https://michaelmedwards.wordpress.com/2015/02/06/meadows-tree-project-queens-walk-story-poles-celebration/>

Welcome  
Carved by Dan Sly

With thanks to local primary school children and teenagers from Crocus Fields for their drawings.

Queen Victoria  
Carved by Mark Manders

To commemorate young Queen Victoria, who visited Nottingham in 1843 on the way to Belvoir Castle. Queens Walk was named in 1850.

Youth  
Carved by Dan Sly

Local youth clubs helped to design this street scene which includes club members' footprints.

Green  
Carved by Karl Wilby

Inspired by Thomas Hawksley's Trent Waterworks which first provided safe water for Nottingham, this pole shows how Meadows people care for their environment,

Sport  
Carved by Dan Sly

Meadows sporting heritage, as depicted by local children's drawings which have inspired this design.

Friendship  
Carved by Dan Sly

"That's the thing for me, the cosmopolitan nature, the ethnic mix is unbelievable: there's no room for intolerance" Meadows resident

Faith  
Carved by Dan Sly

The candle symbolising the light of the world, with six icons of different faiths.

Industry  
Carved by Karl Wilby

Meadows History Group reflect on what a busy workplace the Meadows was years ago.

The Old Meadows  
Carved by Dan Sly

Inspired by stories of a bygone age, the film strip captures images of old Meadows life and its cinemas.

Transport  
Carved by Karl Wilby

Trains, buses, trams and bikes, depicts Meadows transport past and present. Designed by pupils of Nottingham Emmanuel School.

The Armed Forces  
Carved by Karl Wilby

The British Legion's Lion - still important today as it was to the men and women in the forces in World War One and World War Two.

The River  
Carved by Karl Wilby

The River Trent - depicting its journey through the Meadows, winding around the pole, under bridges, providing opportunities for recreation, fun for fishermen, canoeists and rowers.

## 23. Welbeck Primary School and Queen's Walk Recreation Ground

The Meadows was a traditional place for playing cricket and, to make sure this could continue after the fields were developed for housing, an area here was included in the 1845 Nottingham Inclosure Act. This protected a number of areas including Queens Walk, Queens Walk Recreation Ground, Victoria Park, Robin Hood Chase, Corporation Oaks, The Arboretum, The Forest and others. All this land was given to the citizens of Nottingham "forever" by the Act, which furthermore requires the council to maintain it and keep it fenced.

<http://www.ng-spaces.org.uk/the-nottingham-inclosure-act-1845-why-it-is-important-today/>

The Meadows Cricket Ground was created in 1860. It was extremely well used with many club matches being played there during the season, well into the 20th century. As football grew in popularity, the cricket pitches



Meadows Cricket ground in 1884.



doubled as football pitches. Today the recreation ground has, a small field for football, sensory garden and a play area which was refurbished in 2008 when a basketball area was installed.

Immediately to the north of the recreation ground is the Welbeck Primary School. This is on the site of Queen's Walk Junior School, which was known in later years as Welbeck School. The original building (see map above and photo right) was demolished in 1971 and replaced with the modern Welbeck Primary School.

[http://ournottinghamshire.org.uk/page\\_id\\_582\\_path\\_0p31p39p67p117p122p.aspx](http://ournottinghamshire.org.uk/page_id_582_path_0p31p39p67p117p122p.aspx)



## 24. Queen's Walk Community Centre and Pilgrim Church



The Queen's Walk Community Centre was formerly the Central Railway Goods Office.

It is believed to have opened in 1901 to coincide with the opening of the railway sidings behind it.

The map below shows the site of the goods yards and the location of the Goods Office - next to the church (top, just left of centre).

The Pilgrim Church was formerly a Congregational Chapel.

On 1st December 1869 a small Congregational mission church was established in an old warehouse in the Meadows. It was an outpost of the main Congregational church in Castle Gate Nottingham – one of the oldest Congregational churches in the Midlands. The mission church was soon thriving and was financially viable, however it suffered from poor accommodation – one report says that the flooring of the warehouse was so rotten that a visiting minister was unfortunate enough to fall through the floor!

During the 1870s the Castlegate Church sent a young enthusiastic minister, Mr William Lee, to the mission. He stayed at the church for many years and saw it re-housed in a brand new building – what is today the Pilgrim Church.

<http://www.ournottinghamshire.org.uk/>

As this 1915 map shows, a large area of the Meadows used to be occupied by railway lines, goods yards, engine sheds, sidings, etc – the Great Central Railway (Great Central Main Line - GCML) which was built in 1899.

The GCML was the last main line railway to be built in Britain during the Victorian period. It extended an existing Manchester - Sheffield line south via Nottingham, Leicester and Rugby to London Marylebone.

Its construction through Nottingham involved over 2km of tunnelling, under the city centre, north to Carrington, and almost 1.6 km of viaduct, from below High Pavement, via the Arkwright St station, to the River Trent.

In the 1960s, the line was considered by Dr Beeching as an unnecessary duplication of other lines that served the same places, especially the Midland Main Line, and most of the route was closed between 1966 and 1969.

Today there is no obvious trace of the Great Central Railway in the Meadows (other than the community centre building).

