

## 12A. Beeston Canal. Boots & Nottingham Science Park 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. 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.

Where the Beeston Cut met the Nottingham Canal, the canal company installed a chain across the navigation, preventing boats from passing without paying the toll. The junction is still known as Lenton Chain today.

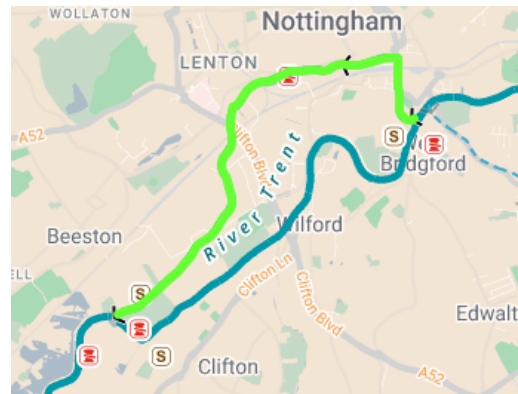
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/canals-and-rivers/nottingham-and-beeston-canal>

### 2. 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)



### 3. Chain Lane Bridge

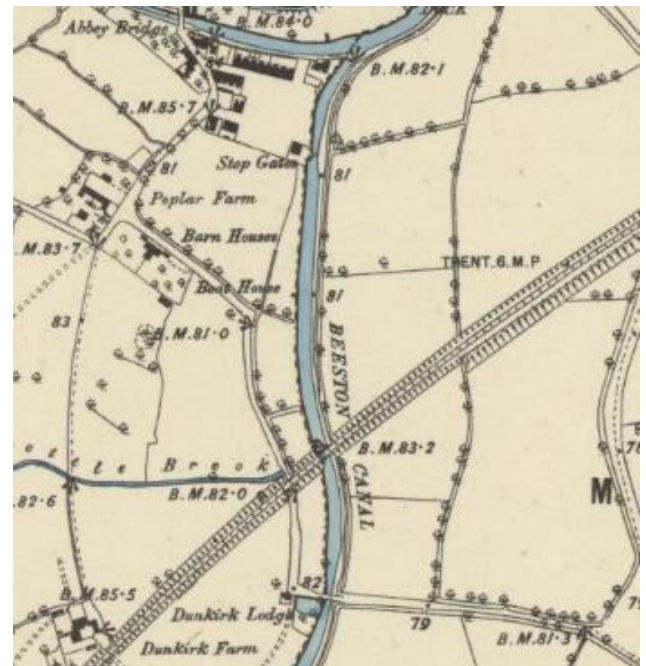
The bridge is just to the left of the **X** on the Google map below



On this old map (surveyed: 1880 to 1881) the area was very different in the 1800s – mainly open fields with a few farms.

Chain Lane is towards the bottom of the map, from the bottom right and then crossing the canal to Dunkirk Lodge – I have not found any mention on-line of this property or the adjacent Dunkirk Farm. I have also not been able to find out the origin of the name Chain Lane, unless it was associated with the canal company in the past installing a chain across the canal (as noted at **1** above), preventing boats from passing without paying the toll. This, however, was further north where the Beeston Cut met the Nottingham Canal.

The main purpose of showing these two maps is to emphasise the huge change over the years – although from the view along the canal, you could imagine it was still as it was in the 1800s.



### 4. The Boots Factory

The Boots Factory Site at Beeston, is the location for the headquarters of the pharmaceutical company Boots UK Limited and its manufacturing, packing and distribution centre. Nottingham has been home to the Boots brand since its humble beginnings when John Boot opened a small herbalist store on Goose Gate in 1849.

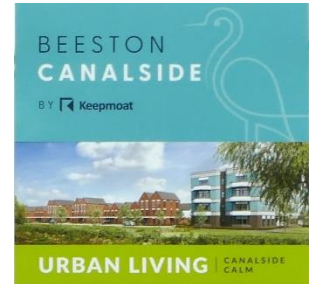


The 279-acre Beeston site was developed from 1926. It contains a number of significant buildings, including "some of the most important" examples of 20th-century Modernist design in Britain. The most important are the two designed by Owen Williams; the D10, 'Wets' building, and the D6, 'Drys' building. Both are Grade I listed buildings, D10 being the largest Grade I listed structure in Britain. The headquarters office, D90, was designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and is designated Grade II\*.

On the site, Ibuprofen was invented and leading brands such as No7, Boots Soltan, Botanics and Boots Pharmaceuticals have been, and still are, developed, formulated and manufactured.

The site remains the headquarters of Boots UK Limited in the 21st century, although the company is now owned by the American pharmacy chain Walgreens, through the Walgreens Boots Alliance. [At the time of writing, WBA was expected to be taken over by a private equity firm, Sycamore Partners – this may effect the future of the site].

Parts of the site, visible to the west along Thane Road, have been zoned for residential development.



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boots\\_Factory\\_Site](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boots_Factory_Site)

## Nottingham Enterprise Zone



In March 2011, the Boots site was awarded Enterprise Zone status by the UK Government. Enterprise Zones are designated areas with incentives to encourage the creation of new businesses, which will contribute to the growth of local and national economies.

The Nottingham Enterprise Zone is comprised of part of the Boots site and three other smaller sites – the Beeston Business Park, the Nottingham Science Park [see 7 below] and the MediPark site (at Queens Medical Centre) which together make up 286 acres.

The vision for the site is to create a UK centre for innovation in health beauty and wellbeing in Nottingham. The site will offer a cost effective, high quality, centrally located site for health and wellbeing businesses such as business incubators, start-ups and small and medium enterprises. As well as existing buildings suitable for redevelopment, the site also includes around 100 acres of brownfield land suitable for development.

<https://www.boots-uk.com/about-boots-uk/company-information/boots-in-nottingham/>

## 5. Dr Stewart Adams Bridge

The Dr Stewart Adams Bridge opened on 8th March 2019, named in recognition of the pioneering work undertaken by Boots scientist Dr Adams, that led to the discovery of ibuprofen. This bridge connects Boots to the University of Nottingham, where Dr Adams first studied and later received his professorship. Stewart Adams had a highly successful career at Boots, working in the business for over 45 years.

On 3rd February 1969, 16 years after Dr Adams began working on the project, Boots launched ibuprofen under the brand name Brufen, as a prescription anti-rheumatic product. By 1980, on average 2.5 million patients a day were receiving ibuprofen worldwide and Brufen became the UK's No.1 anti-inflammatory treatment. In the years following its launch ibuprofen was established as one of the most clinically effective and best-selling anti-rheumatics in the country and later became the first such drug to be available over the counter with the launch of Nurofen in 1984.

In 1987 Dr Adams was awarded an OBE and in 2013 he was made an Honorary Freeman of the City of Nottingham.

## 6. Beeston Sidings Nature Reserve and 7. Nottingham Science Park

The site's website describes the Science Park as being:

*"unlike most in the country. Strategically located between business and academia, with Boots one side and the University of Nottingham the other, our offices and meetings rooms are located in a park environment – green, quiet and with space to clear your head or search for inspiration.*

*It has excellent transport links to the M1, East Midlands Airport and the Nottingham Tram linking the site to Nottingham railway station, attracting the best Nottingham has to offer in a leafy, peaceful environment.*

*Our links with Nottingham's universities, businesses, Local Enterprise Partnership and local Growth Hub provide dedicated business support and advice to provide you with everything you need to take your ideas and transform them into something special".*

The newest building is the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Building. It opened in 2022 providing "space for research and development. The hub space contains a prominently positioned café, meeting rooms and outdoor seating located on the pedestrian route between the science park and the nearby tram stop".

<https://www.nottinghamsciencepark.com>

A significant part of the Science Park site is occupied by The Nottingham College which states "Our Highfields campus is home to our Engineering and Electrical courses. This is alongside the new addition of our Motor Vehicle courses which will be taught at a brand new facility at Highfields starting in September 2025.

*This is quite fitting seeing as the campus is located in the heart of the Nottingham Science Park and on the edge of the University of Nottingham campus which has an international reputation for engineering and technology".*

<https://www.nottinghamcollege.ac.uk/student-life/campuses/highfields>

Behind the Science Park is the Beeston Sidings Nature Reserve; an area of woodland around a pond which provides a range of habitats for wildlife. Dunkirk Pond was a flooded ballast pit originally dug in the 1830s to provide material for the railway embankment for the Midland Main Line.

[https://www.lentontimes.co.uk/streets/dunkirk\\_pond.htm](https://www.lentontimes.co.uk/streets/dunkirk_pond.htm)

