

## **A complicated plot**

A self-guided walk around St Anns Allotments in Nottingham



Explore the largest area of Victorian detached town gardens in the world

See evidence of how the site has changed in use over the centuries

Find out about successive generations of gardeners and what they have grown

Discover an array of trees, plants and wildlife in the heart of the city

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**the stories of our landscapes  
discovered through walks**



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# A complicated plot

## Discover a unique green space in Nottingham

Over 700 gardens, 140 varieties of apple, 43 types of bird, 32 miles of hedgerow. Not what you expect to find in an inner city neighbourhood.

This walk takes you around a remarkable green space in Nottingham that has recently been awarded Grade 2\* Listed status. It is the oldest and largest area of Victorian detached town gardens in the world.

This hilly site has been cultivated for the last 700 years.

Discover how it has changed over time from common ground to Victorian leisure gardens and from working-class allotments to community resource.



Victorian glasshouse and formal garden  
© Jenny Lunn



Carrots being nurtured  
© Jenny Lunn

Find out about the different types of people who have leased plots over the centuries, the things they liked to grow and how gardening has changed.

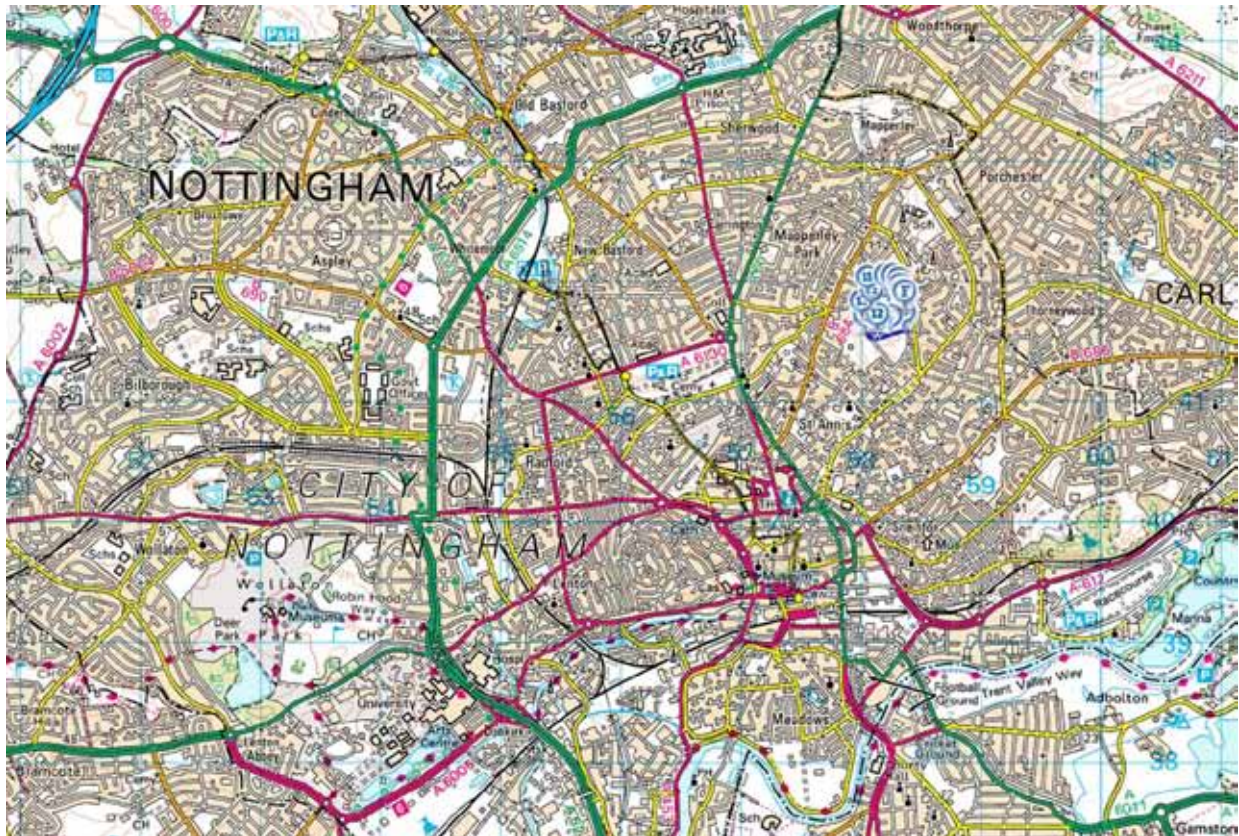
Explore the avenues and pathways of this 75 acre site to discover vegetable plots and flower beds, summerhouses and glasshouses, fruit trees and wildflower meadows.

This walk has been created in collaboration with STAA Ltd, a small tenant-run charity.



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## Walk location



### Important information about access

St Anns Allotments is **private land** and there are no public footpaths through it. However, you are able to visit the site and enjoy this walk around it.

You can only do this walk during **public opening hours**. The Visitor Centre is normally open weekdays from 10am to 4pm but do call beforehand to check (0115 958 9255). Also check the website ([www.staa-allotments.org.uk](http://www.staa-allotments.org.uk)) for weekend opening times which vary through the year. You will also find details of Open Days and Heritage Tours.

Please report to the **Visitor Centre** before setting off on the walk. The site staff need to ensure that Oliver's Display Garden (Stops 10-12) is open when you arrive there.

There are also two other gardens on the walk route that you can access with **prior permission** of the tenants if you are interested: Garden 385/6 (Stop 4) to see the stream and well and Garden 305 (Stop 6) to see an old summerhouse. Ask Visitor Centre staff if access is possible on the day of your visit.

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## Practical information

<b>Location</b>	Nottingham, East Midlands
<b>Start and finish point</b>	St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre, 121 Ransom Road, NG3 3LH
<b>Getting there</b>	<p><b>Car</b> - About two miles northeast of the city centre of Nottingham. Free street parking on Ransom Road; limited onsite parking for disabled people.</p> <p><b>Train</b> - Nearest station Nottingham (2 miles) which is well served by trains from across the country.</p> <p><b>Bus</b> - Bus Numbers 40, 41 and 42 (Blue Line) run from the city centre through St Anns; Bus Number 45 (Blue Line) runs from the city centre through Mapperley.</p> <p><b>Bicycle</b> - National Cycle Route 6 (London to the Lake District) passes through Nottingham; cycle racks available at the Visitor Centre.</p>
<b>Directions from bus stop to start</b>	<p>If using the Number 40 or 41 bus from the city centre, alight on St Anns Well Road at the stop for Ransom Road; turn left at the traffic lights up Ransom Road and the Visitor Centre is on the left after about 500 metres.</p> <p>If using the Number 42 bus from the city centre, alight at the stop near the bottom of Ransom Road; continue walking up Ransom Road and the Visitor Centre is on the left after about 250 metres.</p> <p>If using the Number 45 bus from the city centre, alight on Woodborough Road at the stop for Ransom Road Top. Walk about 150 metres back along Woodborough Road and Ransom Road is the first turning on the left. Follow the road downhill and the Visitor Centre is on the right after about 800 metres.</p>
<b>Walk distance</b>	1 mile
<b>Level</b>	Gentle – A short walk but the site is hilly and there are some steep ascents and descents.
<b>Terrain</b>	The route follows surfaced paths including tarmac, gravel and bark chippings.

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**Suitable for**

**Families** – Lots for children to find out about how food is grown; the walk route is shared with vehicles so take care with young children.

**Prams and pushchairs** – The step-free route is suitable for prams and pushchairs although there are some short and steep slopes.

**Dogs** – Dogs on a lead are welcome on the site but please note there are no waste bins provided.

**Wheelchairs** – While the route is step-free it is not really suitable for wheelchairs as the narrow lanes are shared with vehicles and there are some steep slopes. Contact the Visitor Centre in advance if you have questions about access.

**Best time of year**

There is something to see on the allotments all year round but Spring to Autumn is the best period to visit.

In Winter there is less vegetation so you can see into more gardens; Spring is best for blossom; Summer is best for the wild flower meadows; September and October is harvest time.

**Conditions**

Although most of the route is surfaced, the site can be muddy after wet weather.

**Hazards**

Depending on the season, watch out for low branches, nettles and brambles, and wasps along the hedgerows. Also watch out for uneven surfaces, tools or other garden equipment that may be lying around.

**Refreshments**

Teas and coffees are available at the Visitor Centre.

**Important note:** Do not drink out of any of the taps around the site as this water is from a borehole and not potable; the water at the Visitor Centre is safe for drinking.

**Toilets**

- Flushing toilets at the Visitor Centre (Stops 1 and 21)
- Compost toilet with baby changing facilities at the Heritage Display Garden (Stops 10-12)

**Tourist information**

Nottingham Tourism Centre, Smithy Row, Nottingham NG1 2BY  
Tel: 0844 477 5678



## Route map





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## Stopping points

1. St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre
2. St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre
3. Junction of 13th Avenue and 7th Avenue
4. Garden B385/6, 13th Avenue
5. Junction of 13th Avenue and 5th Avenue
6. Garden B305, 5th Avenue
7. Garden B288, 5th Avenue
8. Garden B283, 5th Avenue
9. Gateway to Heritage Display Garden, 1st Avenue
10. The Victorian Garden, Oliver's Heritage Display Garden
11. Dig for Victory Garden, Oliver's Heritage Display Garden
12. 21st Century Garden, Oliver's Heritage Display Garden
13. Garden B144, 1st Avenue
14. Junction of 8th Avenue and 9th Avenue
15. Junction of 9th Avenue and 10th Avenue
16. Ecoworks car park, 10th Avenue
17. End of pathway into Stonepit Copse, 10th Avenue
18. Beside Coppice Park, 12th Avenue
19. Garden C79a, 12th Avenue
20. Junction of 12th Avenue, 13th Avenue and 8th Avenue
21. St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre

## Navigating around the site

The 75 acre site is divided up into a grid system. There are 14 principal avenues, most of which are wide enough for vehicles. Off these are narrower pathways (usually gated and locked) which provide access to individual gardens.

The walk route follows some of the main avenues around the site (13th, 5th, 1st, 8th, 9th, 10th and 12th) with just one detour along a gated pathway into the Heritage Garden.

There are signposts at junctions for the main avenues and most of the garden gates are numbered.

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## Directions

Listen to each track then read the directions below to get to the next stop.

### 1. Welcome to Nottingham

#### St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre

##### Directions 1

Remain at the Visitor Centre and listen to Track 2.

### 2. A hillside of clay

#### St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre

##### Directions 2

Turn left out of the gates of the Visitor Centre and left along 13th Avenue. After about 100 metres there is a turning for 7th Avenue on the right. Stop at this junction and listen to Track 3.

### 3. Burgess Parts

#### Junction of 13th Avenue and 7th Avenue

##### Directions 3

Continue along 13th Avenue for about 100 metres. Just after passing the end of 5th Avenue on the right, look for Garden B385/6 on the left. Stop by the gate and listen to Track 4.

### 4. Curative waters

#### Garden B385/6, 13th Avenue

##### Directions 4

Retrace your steps a short distance along 13th Avenue to the bottom of 5th Avenue (also known as Gentleman's Avenue) which rises up the hill to the left. Stop at the junction and listen to Track 5.

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## **5. “No Burgess Parts shall be occupied as gardens”**

### **Junction of 13th Avenue and 5th Avenue**

#### **Directions 5**

Begin to walk up 5th Avenue. After about 100 metres the path levels off and the tarmac surface ends. Shortly after this look for Garden B305 on the right. Stop outside the gate and listen to Track 6.

## **6. Detached gardens**

### **Garden B305, 5th Avenue**

#### **Directions 6**

Continue along 5th Avenue. Stop outside Garden B288 on the left and listen to Track 7.

## **7. A change of tenants**

### **Garden 288, 5th Avenue**

#### **Directions 7**

Continue along 5th Avenue for a short distance. Stop outside Garden B283 on the left and listen to Track 8.

## **8. Nottingham Garden Holders Association**

### **Garden B283, 5th Avenue**

#### **Directions 8**

Continue along 5th Avenue a little further to the T junction. Turn right along 1st Avenue (also known as Ford's Avenue). Follow the surfaced road past the car park which is signposted to the Heritage Garden. Just after the car park, look for the first metal gate on the right which has a sign for Heritage Display Garden. Stop by this gate and listen to Track 9.

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## 9. High hedges

### Gateway to Heritage Display Garden, 1st Avenue

#### Directions 9

Go through the metal gate signposted Heritage Display Garden and walk along the pathway. After a short distance it bears round to the right. At the end is the gate to Garden 319 which has a sign Oliver's Heritage Display Garden. Go through the gate into the garden. Walk straight along the path to the information post for the Victorian Garden which is just to the right of the glasshouse. Stop here and listen to Track 10.

## 10. Glasshouses and summerhouses

### The Victorian Garden, Heritage Display Garden

#### Directions 10

Remain in the display garden but move to the adjacent section which has an apple tree, plots and beds, and an information post for the Dig for Victory Garden. Stop here and listen to Track 11.

## 11. Feeding the nation

### Dig for Victory Garden, Heritage Display Garden

#### Directions 11

Remain in the display garden but move to the adjacent section which has four planted beds and an information post for the 21st Century Garden. Stop here and listen to Track 12.

## 12. Gardening today

### 21st Century Garden, Heritage Display Garden

#### Directions 12

When you are ready, leave the display garden and retrace your steps along the pathway to the metal gate. Turn right and walk along 1st (Ford's) Avenue. Immediately after passing the gate of Garden B144 on the left is the brick end wall of a summerhouse. Stop here and listen to Track 13.



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### **13. Living on the plot**

#### **Garden B144, 1st Avenue**

##### **Directions 13**

Carry on along 1st Avenue, which bends round to the right after a short distance where it becomes 8th Avenue. Stop when you reach the next junction with 9th Avenue and listen to Track 14.

### **14. Stonepit Coppice**

#### **Junction of 8th Avenue and 9th Avenue**

##### **Directions 14**

Walk up 9th Avenue for about 100 metres until you reach a corner where 9th Avenue continues straight ahead unsurfaced and 10th Avenue goes down to the right. Stop at this junction and listen to Track 15.

### **15. Floral insanity**

#### **Junction of 9th Avenue and 10th Avenue**

##### **Directions 15**

Walk down 10th Avenue for about 150 metres. Stop when you reach the entrance to a small car park on the left and listen to Track 16.

### **16. Bringing the community to the gardens**

#### **Ecoworks car park, 10th Avenue**

##### **Directions 16**

Continue down 10th Avenue for a short distance. Stop when you reach Garden C96a on the right. Look opposite at the pathway and steps into the trees and listen to Track 17.

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## **17. Birds, bats and beanpoles**

### **End of pathway into Stonepit Copse, 10th Avenue**

#### **Directions 17**

When you are ready, continue down 10th Avenue. At the bottom it curves to the right and becomes 12th Avenue with a modern metal fence on the left. Stop after a short distance at the top of a rise in the avenue and listen to Track 18.

## **18. From wood to garden to park**

### **12th Avenue**

#### **Directions 18**

Continue down 12th Avenue. After about 50 metres, stop outside Garden C79a on the right and listen to Track 19.

## **19. A global garden**

### **Garden C79a, 12th Avenue**

#### **Directions 19**

Continue along 12th Avenue for a short distance until you reach the junction with 13th Avenue and 8th Avenue. Stop at the junction and listen to Track 20.

## **20. Changing times**

### **Junction of 12th Avenue, 13th Avenue and 8th Avenue**

#### **Directions 20**

Go through the gate into the grounds of the Visitor Centre and listen to Track 21.

## **21. A new lease of life**

### **St Anns Allotments Visitor Centre Garden**

#### **Directions 21**

This is the end of the walk. Do pop into the Visitor Centre to give your feedback and have a cup of tea.

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## Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance in producing this Discovering Britain walk:

- **STAA Ltd** for kind permission to create a walk around their site and for providing photographs and archival material
- **Mo Cooper**, Heritage Officer at STAA, for researching the walk and providing the commentary
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