

OLD BASFORD AND NEW BASFORD WALK



A circular walk from Vernon Park that explores the River Leen Greenway and the heritage of Old and New Basford. See Whitemoor Nature Reserve, St Leodegarius Church and two huge old breweries.

Walk No. 14

A circular walk from Vernon Park through the industrial heritage of Old and New Basford and along several stretches of the River Leen. It passes landmarks like the old Futurist cinema, Shipstone's Brewery, St Leodegarius church and the Rock House stone wall on Stockhill Lane.

THE FACTS

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| Area | Old Basford, New Basford and Whitemoor |
| Distance | About 4 miles/ 6.5 km. |
| Duration | 2.5-3 hours. |
| Maps and Information | This leaflet, street map, OS Explorer 1:25000 Map 260, 2 Godfrey Edition old OS maps with information also: "Old Basford 1913" + "Nottingham NW 1913" (New Basford and Hyson Green). |
| Travel Information | Turquoise and yellow line buses www.nctx.co.uk ; Tram stops on the route: David Lane, Basford (Vernon Road) Wilkinson Street and Shipstone Street www.thetram.net |
| Terrain | Mostly flat pavements and paths, some gentle slopes, with 2 steeper ones on Alpine Street and Basford Road (point F). |
| Start/ Finish | Basford Library on Vernon Road, next to Vernon Park. |
| Refreshments | Fox and Crown on Church Street and Horse and Groom on Radford Road. A café on Whitemoor Road, takeaways on Arnold Road and McDonalds at the Radford Road and Valley Road junction. A Sainsbury's is on Perry Road. |
| Extension: | An interesting circuit of St Leodegarius church by going along Church Street and over the River Leen, then over the Leen again along Western Boulevard, then back to the church (see point E). |

Cover images: Clockwise from top left: Hutchinson's Prince of Wales Brewery; River Leen swan and Shipstone's Brewery; Ernest Sallis factory by Vernon Park gateway; Vernon Park lake.

THE ROUTE

A: Go into Vernon Park to the right of **Basford Library**. Walk left around the lake and notice the **River Leen** to your left. Further round, walk along the lime tree avenue between the play park and the playing fields. After 200m, turn left and up through the large stone gateway and out the park. Walk past the surprising uncompleted end of **St Aidan's church**, then left down Arnold Road. After the Baptist church, turn left along Queensberry Street to reach Waterford Street. Turn right, down past the **Ernest Sallis 1940s art deco-style factory** and then left over the Leen on Southwark Bridge. *Carefully* cross David Lane railway and tram crossings or else use the striking red footbridge.

B: Straight after, go left along Lincoln Street and in 200m at the railings, take the path left into the **Lincoln Street Water Meadows**. It's next to the Leen and the path goes round the reedy pond. Look for the **Day Brook** joining the river just downstream. Leave at the gate onto The Mill Close, then left, along Lincoln Street again. Soon, turn left down the old, main Nottingham Road route, explaining the high street numbers for a short cul-de-sac! Pass the stone wall of an old Leen bridge, then cross the railway and Basford tram stop using the bridge. Just on your left, cross Vernon Road at the pedestrian crossing.

C: Turn right, then left at the Radford Road roundabout. Go past **Jasmine Cottages** and soon after, cross Valley Road opposite the 1937 ex-**Futurist cinema**. Continue ahead up Nottingham Road to **Basford Cemetery**, with its stone buildings, trees and meadow. It's worth exploring if it's open. Cross Nottingham Road at the Perry Road traffic lights by Sainsbury's, then down Silverdale Road, just right of the church hall. At the other end, go left along Radford Road, past Isandula Road's old police station, with a horse tram depot from 1881 behind it. At the fork further along, go left along Eland Street. You'll pass Shipstone's 1931 maltings with their unusual chimney cowl. At the top, turn right down North Gate to the **Horse and Groom** pub.

D Here, turn left across North Gate and along Radford Road, closely past the tall **1905 Shipstone's Star Brewery** building. Continue over the tram lines and soon after The Valve Shop, cross Radford Road to the top of Wilkinson Street. For a more open view of Shipstone's, you could walk on the other side of Radford Road from the Horse and Groom, but it's slightly awkward crossing Wilkinson Street. Now descend Wilkinson

Street, noticing the Leen, before passing the tall, isolated chimney of the old **Gerard's soap factory**, hidden to your left. Cross the road where the tram tracks bend right, next to **Whitemoor Allotments**. Begin the **River Leen Greenway** at the signpost, through reed beds on a boardwalk. After it, turn left through **Whitemoor Nature Reserve**. Keep left to soon re-join the Leen, then continue upstream. Go past the stored fairground vehicles behind the hedge and then under the Western Boulevard bridge to reveal **St Leodegarius church** and its garden churchyard. Follow the path to reach Church Street.

E: Here, either go left, down past the church entrance and round to the Church Street pedestrian crossing. Alternatively, go right, on a busy, but interesting circuit of St Leodegarius church. Go across the one-way bridge over the Leen, past the ruin of the unused Irwin Business Centre and St Leos Green open space, then right, over the Western Boulevard bridge. Look for the **ladder climbing figure** here. Turn right to also reach the Church Street crossing. Cross over the pedestrian crossing now, then go right along Church Street and over Bailey Street. Soon you see the C18th **Basford House** on your right and facing it, the entrance to Basford's hidden second cemetery. There are some fine monuments here. Continue ahead to the **White Swan**, where legend says that Charles II stayed while his horseshoe was replaced at a blacksmith and this later stopped the inn's demolition to remove the tight corner.

F: Round the corner there's a dramatic view up Alpine Street of **Hutchinson's Prince of Wales Brewery**. You can take a short cut there by continuing up Alpine Street to the junction by the fire-damaged **Vedonis** factory opposite the Brewery. For extra interest, go up Basford Road past the cemetery and an old chapel, then right along Whitemoor Road. This goes past the Edwardian gateways and **cedar tree** of Bar Lane Industrial Park, then **Basford Maltings**. Continue along Percy Street to Old Basford Primary School. Cross Percy Street here, then turn left to reach Mill Street.

G: Facing you at the junction is the **Rock House stone wall**. Turn right down Mill Street, then cross it at the zebra below Bagnall Road. Look back at the wall to see the remarkable church architecture built into it. Before the garage, turn left past the ruins of a corn mill and its overgrown water channel behind. Soon after, take the first road right into the housing estate and keep right along Swallow Close to the River

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Leen. Turn right, back to Basford Crossings. Cross over them, noticing the old **Vernon Picture House** in front of you, then turn right, back to Basford Library.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Vernon Park: *Vernon Park was originally the home of a bleacher, Charles Cox, whose factory was next door, now demolished. He moved to Rock House on Mill Street, sold the land to the Council, who opened the park in 1901. His house became the pavilion for a new bowls club while the pond originally supplied water from the Leen to his bleach works. In 2012 on her Diamond Jubilee, Queen Elizabeth visited Vernon Park as patron of Fields in Trust as Vernon Park was the latest park or green space to receive this accolade.*

Vernon Road: *The railway next to Vernon Road was built with 2 new level crossings on old Nottingham Road and David Lane. This made the horse bus journey to Bulwell along Lincoln Street very slow, so in 1882 Basford businesses persuaded the Midland Railway to build the Vernon Road shortcut. The long, tall, stone wall you see was then built to stop the horses now using Vernon Road being startled by the trains.*

Lincoln Street and Basford Town: *Lincoln Street was the shopping street for 'Basford Town', the name for narrow streets. By 1962 they had all gone and Lincoln Street declined. In 1971 the concrete Basford Flats replaced them and were demolished in 1985. The Lord Nelson pub on Cowley Street is the only reminder. Lincoln Street Water Meadows was once Billy Bacon's Field and from 1930 was the site of Basford Wakes fair, where some rides and stalls moved to after Goose Fair. The Labour Exchange building at the Futurist crossroads was built on the previous site. Bacon was the local butcher who owned the field and grazed cattle, with one shop at 9 Lincoln Street.*

Futurist Cinema: *The Art Deco-style cinema, built by architect A J Thraves, opened in 1937 and could once seat 1300 people. Closed in 1977 with the Sound of Music, but only a year previously its circle had been re-opened. It has been stripped out and is now offices.*

New Basford: *Originally heathland called Basford Lings. New Basford began about 1820 with 5 streets leading up from North Gate. Lace machines had been invented by John Heathcote and Nottingham needed more land for lace factories. The last area*

to be built on was for Edwardian workers, most with street names like Egypt, Rosetta, and Isandula, after UK military campaigns in Africa and the Middle East. Eland though is named after William Eland, deputy custodian of the castle, who lived in Algarthorpe Hall, which used to be located just off Radford Road. He took Edward III famously up Mortimer's Hole in 1330 to recapture the castle. Eland Street is now in the Star Buildings Conservation Area.

Shipstone's 1905 Star Brewery: *James Shipstone began brewing "Shippos" on Radford Road in 1852 and his family expanded it. The Horse and Groom nearby was the Brewery Tap. Beer was first carried to pubs on carts pulled by 2 white dray horses, kept in the brewery's stables. They continued brewing until 1978, then were taken over by Greenall Whitley. The brewery closed in 1991 and is now a business centre and the auction rooms of John Pye and Sons.*

St Leodegarius Church: *It owes its name to a C7th French martyr, also known as St Leger and traces of the church dates from the C12th. It's had its floor raised because of flooding, the tower collapsed in 1859 and there was more restoration after a fire during decorating work in 1900. The churchyard has fine Swithland slate gravestones, while in 1816 the hung Basford Luddite James Towle was supposed to have been buried in an unmarked grave near the main gate.*

River Leen in Basford: *Old Basford was Anglo Saxon and grew around 3 River Leen fords at David Lane crossings, Nottingham Road and St Leodegarius church. From the 1790s people came here to framework-knit hosiery and used the clean water from the Leen for bleaching and dyeing works. Pearson's on Southwark Bridge still exists. Willow plantations were planted by William Scaling in the damp fields behind Mill Street. He created a thriving wicker industry in Basford from about the 1840s. The Leen once meandered far more in Basford. It still meanders in Vernon Park and the ruined Mill Street corn mill is on the old river course. Lincoln Street was flooded in 1947 and in the 1960s most of the river channel in Basford was straightened and deepened to prevent more flooding. You can see water voles, swans and kingfishers and chub swimming in the river.*

Prince of Wales Brewery and Maltings: *Built in 1891 for Henry Hutchinson and Sons and like Shipstone's, by William Bradford. It was sold in 1919 to Murphy and Son, suppliers to the brewing trade, who are still there. The maltings are now residential.*

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- The Walk
- St Leodegarius Church (Point E)
- Tram Stops

1:8,000

