



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

University Park

Gardens Guide and Tree Walk



The Friends of University Park encourage everyone to enjoy the campus grounds and all are welcome at their events.
w: nott.ac.uk/friends

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We are proud of the University's landscaped campuses and visitors are welcome to enjoy our gardens, walks and trees.

University Park has been awarded a Green Flag every year since 2003. We were the first University to achieve this. Other awards include

those from Nottingham and East Midlands in Bloom, the local and National Civic Trust and the British Association of Landscape Industries.

Please use this guide to explore and enjoy University Park.



Horticultural highlights

University Park is very much in the English landscape style, with rolling grassland, many trees, shrubs and water features. An adjoining lake divides it from Highfields Park, which is managed by Nottingham City Council.

Formal displays

One of our boldest displays is at the North Entrance beside the A52 roundabout. A contemporary arrangement of informal beds for annual bedding is backed by a border of exotic shrubs, bamboos and grasses, which add value in winter. These are complemented by boulders and areas of cobbles.

In the summer the display beds are vibrant with exotic annuals and bedding plants. In spring they are awash with colour from biennials and spring bulbs.

A second, smaller area of formal bedding is at the West Entrance by the old lodges. In the summer, large pots of brilliant bedding plants enhance our involvement in Nottingham in Bloom.





Jekyll Garden

The Jekyll Garden is attached to Lenton Hurst, one of the older houses in University Park, and its formal design contrasts with more modern layouts elsewhere on the campus. The house was built for William Player, younger son of tobacco magnate John Player.

The sunken garden was designed by Gertrude Jekyll in 1911. There are, however, no surviving plans suggesting it was one of her minor

commissions. It has eight small beds in a formal geometric style and two long borders.

It is separated from the house by a dramatic rock garden terrace which was restored in 2010 by the Friends of University Park and gardens staff. The sunken garden area beyond was replanted with herbaceous perennials in a Jekyll style incorporating colour and seasonal borders.

Water features

The park is richly endowed with water features. At the South Entrance an informal lake has marginal plantings and a large floating fountain.

The Millennium Garden includes a circular pond with an island and 12 fountains that 'tell the time'. Nearby a small dew pond acts as a natural pond for wildlife.

Formal ponds with fountains elsewhere include the Chemistry Building's courtyard, where three

fountains are set among boulders. Next to the plaza between the Pope Building and Engineering Science Learning Centre is a multiple fountain in a rectangular pool.

Outside the Centre for Biomolecular Sciences there is a formal pond with a geyser fountain and nearby a series of three pools with cascades and a fountain. To the south west is a chain cascade outside the Humanities Building.



Fountains outside the History Department building, Lenton Grove.



The walled garden is a quiet oasis.

Highfields walled garden

Highfields House sits in the centre of University Park and was built in about 1797 for the Lowe family. It has a fine old garden with many beautiful trees including a huge Tulip Tree and several cedars. Around the house are borders of exotic and unusual plants. Hidden amongst the laurel shrubbery is a curious carved stone object, of origin and purpose unknown.

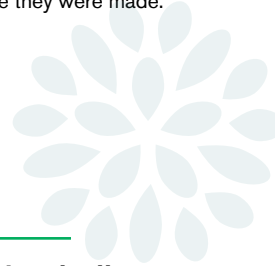
The house's walled garden was once much larger and 'filled with vineries, stove houses and exotic plants'. It was part of an elaborate estate that ran down to the fishpond that was later enlarged to

form the lake. The walled garden is now a quiet oasis. Its centrepiece is an ornamental wellhead. Seats are set into niches and within a wrought iron arbour.

The garden was replanted in a late Victorian style using exotic plants such as hardy bamboos and the hardy banana *Musa basjoo*. In summer the displays are enhanced by tender foliage and flowering plants. Two long borders are planted with herbaceous perennials in a hot colour scheme.

Stunning wrought iron gates open on to the path to the Trent

Building. These old gates originally hung next to the West Entrance gatehouses, when the University buildings were first constructed in the 1920s, and had lain derelict and forgotten for many years. Purely by chance, during their restoration, they returned to yard where they were made.



The wrought iron gates.

Spring bulbs

Thousands of spring bulbs, especially narcissus, are planted throughout University Park in a wide range of cultivars. Most are planted as naturalistic drifts in grass areas. The earliest to flower are February Gold running through the season to the late flowering jonquils. These grass areas are left uncut until June and a succession of wild flowers take over the display as the narcissus finish.

In the north-west corner of the campus near Lenton Lodge an area of the native Nottingham crocus, a form of *Crocus vernus* that produces sheets of pale



blue flowers in early spring. Once common in the Trent Valley, colonies of the crocus are now sparse and endangered.

The Old Botanic Garden

This area near the centre of campus used to have formal order beds to represent the plant kingdom to allow the traditional teaching of botany. Now the garden is a quiet retreat with a number of unusual plants.

There is a fine Medlar, Cedars, Ginkgo, Nothofagus and Taxodium. A more recent collection of unusual trees and shrubs will add interest as they mature. Gaps in the berberis hedge give fine views the green roofs of the Lakeside Arts Centre and out across south Nottingham.

The Vale of Tears

This grassed area to the east of the Visitor Car Park gets its name from a collection of weeping trees including birch, ash, beech and willow. There are also fine specimens of *Corylus colurna*, the Turkish Oak and *Liquidambar styraciflua*, renowned for its autumn colour.

East of the Vale of Tears is a group of Eucalyptus trees, under which



each autumn grows a group of Fly Agaric toadstools, whose red hoods denote danger.

Dry Garden

This can be found to the north west of Lenton and Wortley Hall. Excess soil from a building project was used to create the horseshoe-shaped mound with a level 'circus ring' centre. The sandy soil has been planted with drought-tolerant species such as *Cytisus*, *Hippophae* and *Kniphofia* and *Eucalyptus*. There are also island beds of late summer herbaceous perennials and prairie grasses.



Queen Anne's Lace at the edge of The Downs.

The Downs

This vast grassy bowl in the centre of the campus is managed as a wildflower meadow. As acid grassland, it does not have a high proportion of broadleaved flowering species but in early summer is awash with many and varied grass flowers. It is cut each year in early July for a hay crop. Over the years, the number of

species of wildflower has grown along with the wildlife that the meadow supports.

The biodiversity of this habitat is very important as less than 95% of the county's neutral to acidic grasslands remain and The Downs is a good example of managing the landscape for sustainability.



The summer house.

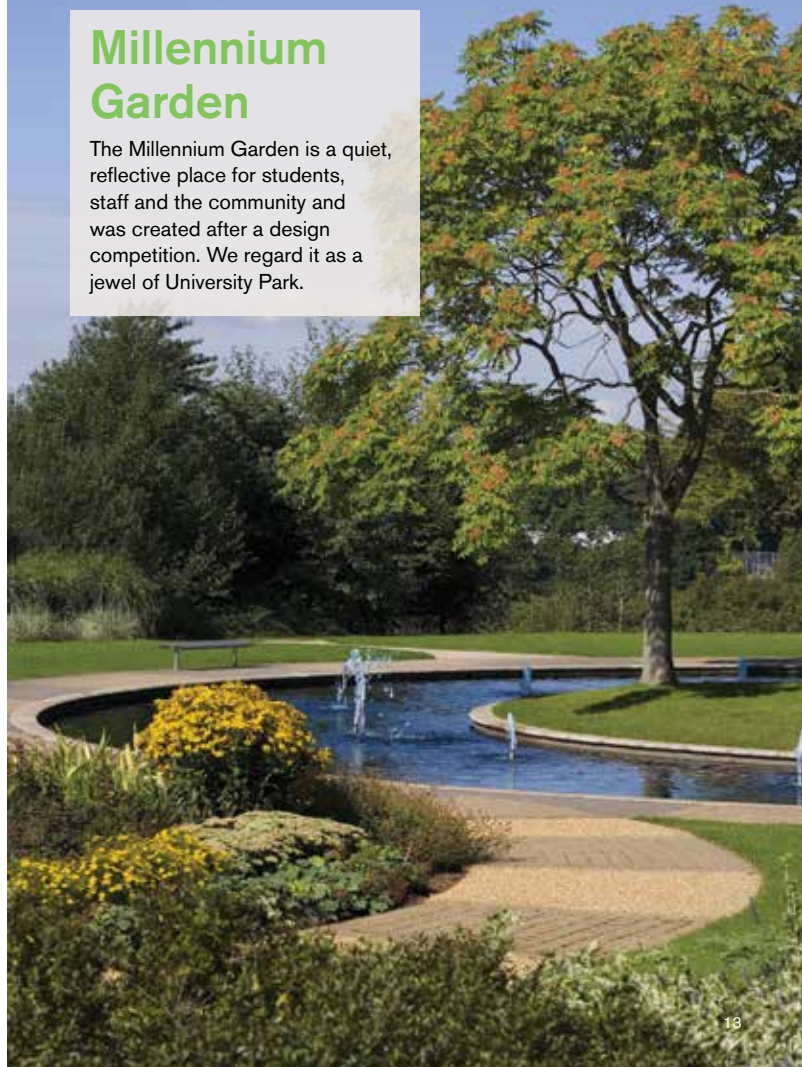
Lenton Firs Rock Garden

Near to Lenton Firs, one of our older houses, is a sycamore woodland, where once slumbered a semi-derelict summer house. Early in 2006, with a grant from the Nottingham Green Partnership, we started to clear heavy vegetation with the aim of improving the woodland.

Around the summer house we discovered an extensive and elaborate rock garden. Over two years, with help from student volunteers and the Friends of

Millennium Garden

The Millennium Garden is a quiet, reflective place for students, staff and the community and was created after a design competition. We regard it as a jewel of University Park.



Millennium Garden

The winners of the competition, Quartet Design, particularly impressed with their vision of a garden that would appeal to students. The bold design is based on the theme of time. A central pathway leads into the garden and to a series of interconnecting circular paths and areas, which form a strong pattern within the centre of the garden.

There is a formal pool with 12 fountains, which 'tell the time' and steel bridges — set low to create a feeling of 'walking on water' — leading to a central island. A specimen of *Ailanthus altissima*, the Tree of Heaven, was kept as the centrepiece of the island and focal point of the garden.

There is ample access for disabled visitors and consideration for wildlife.

The adjacent colour garden, with a focal point of an armillary sphere, has interesting flowers and foliage in all seasons. Colours expand the time theme into a day/night scheme with one bed planted in hot red, orange and yellow colours and the remainder in cool blues, whites and silvers. A circular grassed area is used for

informal seating as well as open-air performances. Twelve sentinel clipped yews, reinforcing the time theme, surround the lawn.

A raised mound with clipped box hedges overlooks the garden and has views of the pool. The focal point of this feature is a stone sculpture, *Flayed Stone*, carved by Peter Randall-Page from a single piece of glacial granite.

Towards the end of the garden is a blue brick and turf maze, an ancient garden feature symbolising the rooting of knowledge in antiquity. Views from here look out across the meadows to the halls of residence and distant housing — emphasising the University's open attitude to learning and knowledge and our involvement in the wider community.

Tree planting has included *Pyrus* 'Chanticleer', *Corylus colurna*, the Turkish Hazel, the golden-leaved *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia', *Ginkgo biloba*, the Maidenhair tree and *Paulownia tomentosa*. Shrubs provide interest at all seasons: evergreens such as *Euonymus* 'Emerald and Gold' give a touch of 'winter sun' and the blocks of dark green box give structure to the



The garden hosts community events. Below: The Orchard Hotel.

garden. Dogwoods provide colour from the bright red winter twigs. Flowering bulbs give spring colour.

Beyond the formal garden is the orchard with meadow grass and spring bulbs. In late spring a double row of white cherry trees provides a pleasing walk.

Lord Dearing, former Chancellor of the University, formally opened the Millennium Garden on Tuesday 4 July 2000. The garden has received many awards and is open for use all year; events held here include the community picnic

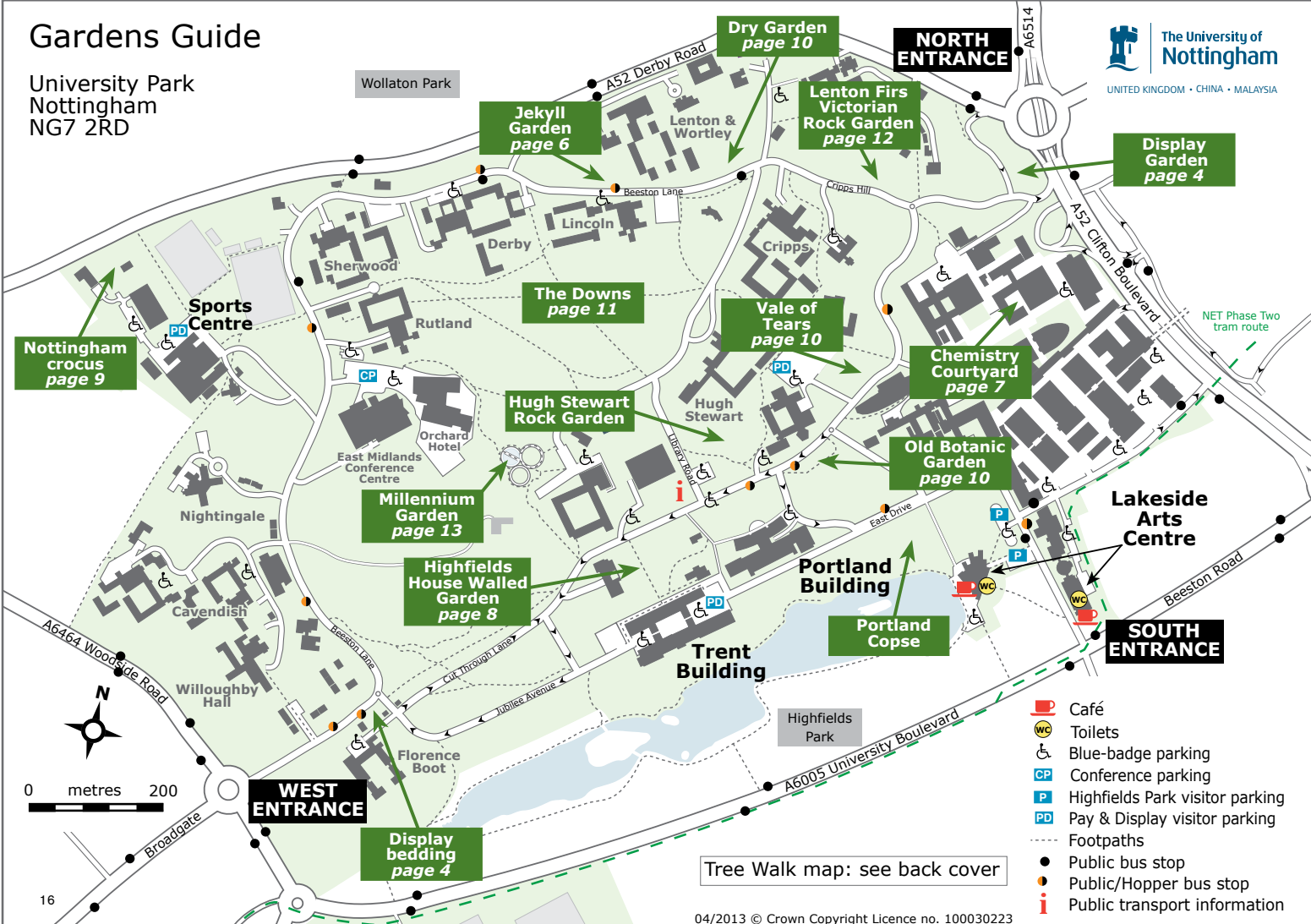


hosted by the Friends of University Park.

North west of the Millennium Garden is the de Vere Orchard Hotel, which opened in 2012 and is open to visitors for dining and refreshments.

Gardens Guide

University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD



Wollaton Park

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NORTH ENTRANCE

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Portland Building

Portland Copse

SOUTH ENTRANCE

Trent Building

0 metres 200

WEST ENTRANCE

Display bedding
page 4

Tree Walk map: see back cover

-  Café
-  Toilets
-  Blue-badge parking
-  Conference parking
-  Highfields Park visitor parking
-  Pay & Display visitor parking
-  Footpaths
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Lakeside Walk

This 1 ¼-mile circular walk joins University Park with Highfields Park. It is suitable for wheelchair users and inclines are signposted.

The path skirts the water's edge, climbs above cliffs giving views of the lake, passes across the stone terrace in front of the Trent Building and then drops beneath

the sandstone cliffs, passing the caves and linking with paths to Highfields Park at the island.

Highfields has a playground and in summer boats can be hired on the lake. The walk rejoins University land at the DH Lawrence Pavilion, Lakeside Arts Centre, where a cafe is open seven days a week.



Tree Walk

Our Tree Walk as a world tour in less than an hour! You'll see trees from Europe, the Mediterranean, Morocco, USA, China, Japan, Himalayas, North Africa and Chile. It is amazing that plants from so many areas, different climates and soils thrive here at University Park.

Tree Walk map: page 31



The Trent Building was opened by King George V in 1928.

Start at the **Trent Building**, **1** which was completed in 1928 and built of Portland stone. It was designed by the London architect Morley Horder. Some described him as a 'poet in brick' but DH Lawrence ridiculed the building as an 'iced cake'. The Lido, lake and University Boulevard were constructed at same time. The building was opened by King George V and Queen Mary in 1928.

In the quadrangle you will see clipped specimens of *Ilex x altarcclarensis* Hodginsii, a form of the Highclere Holly. This strong,

vigorous male clone was once often planted in cities as it tolerates pollution.

Walking out to the west you will come to **Jubilee Avenue**, **2** which was renamed for our Silver Jubilee in 1998. To mark 50 years since granting of its Charter, the University planted 50 London Planes, *Platanus x acerifolia* (x hispanica), a hybrid between *Platanus occidentalis* and *Platanus orientalis* which occurred in Europe around 1650. Looking right across the drive and the West Lawn, we can see a mature specimen alongside **Florence Boot Hall**.



Tree Walk

Tucked around the corner behind a holly hedge is the **Bassingfield Stone**. This Hornblend schist boulder is thought to have been washed down from the Grampian mountains during the last Ice Age. It was discovered in 1949. **3**

At the top of the drive on the left is a mature horse chestnut. These were introduced to Britain from Greece in the 17th Century. There are also specimens of oak, walnut, Cedar of Lebanon and a young *Cedrus deodara* Deodar planted by the Indian High Commissioner. Nearby is one of the entrances to the **Lakeside Walk** (see page 18).

On the right of the drive is a group of young *Acer saccharinum*, the Silver Maple, a fast-growing tree introduced from eastern North America in 1725. **4**

Cross the grass to the right of **Jubilee Drive** and go right behind the small car park. You'll find an example of *Ulmus* 'Sapporo Autumn Gold', the so-called resistant elm. Most English elms now rarely reach any great size due to the Dutch elm disease but this clone is resistant and has good autumn colour. There is another specimen opposite Derby Hall. This 'champion tree' is the largest specimen in the UK. **5**

The very narrow tree nearby is a *Fagus sylvatica* 'Dawyck'. The Dawyck Beech was originally found in a plantation in Dawyck, Peebles, around 1860 but not widely planted until about 1930. **6**

Staying in front of the low stone wall and continuing away from **Jubilee Drive**, you will come to a group of exotic conifers. *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, the Dawn Redwood, is a deciduous conifer, and loses its delicate foliage in winter. Only known as fossil for many years, it was rediscovered in China in 1941. It has good autumn colour. **7**



Highfields House was built for a former Sheriff of Nottingham.

Nearby, the very upright tree with heavy dark green foliage is *Sequoiadendron giganteum* otherwise known as the Wellingtonia, or Mammoth Tree. This native of California was introduced to the UK in 1853 and is acknowledged as the largest living thing. One specimen, the General Sherman Tree, is 81m high with a girth of 24m. It is also one of the most long-lived plants — one is thought to be 3,200-years-old. It was discovered by William Lobb in 1853. **8**

Move up onto the raised lawn in front of **Highfields House**. **9**

This was built around 1797 for Joseph Lowe, a local woollen and linen draper who had been Sheriff of Nottingham in 1763. The Lowe family occupied Highfields for 80 years and owned it for 120. The extensive property featured a walled garden, glasshouses, stables and coach houses as well as farmstead for 25 cows. Jesse Boot bought the estate around 1919 and gave it to the East Midlands University in 1921.

Around the garden are specimens *Acer palmatum*, cultivars of 'Japanese maple', with leaves like small hands. They originate from

Tree Walk

Japan, China and Korea, These small trees need shade and a moist soil to produce good autumn colour.

Near the edge of the garden, at the back of the Trent Building, are examples of *Cedrus atlantica* and *Cedrus atlantica glauca*, the Blue Cedar. This blue form occurs in the wild as well as in cultivation and originates in the Atlas Mountains of Algeria and Morocco. It was introduced in 1840 but not cultivated until the 1900s. **10**

Nearby is a fine example of *Liriodendron tulipiferae*, the Tulip Tree. It has square, truncated leaves and in early summer produces exquisite green tulip-shaped flowers with orange stamens. It is a large, slow-growing tree, which does not flower until maturity, which takes at least 25 years. It originates from North America and was introduced by the 17th-century botanist John Tradescant the Younger. **11**

You can detour here into **Highfields Walled Garden** (see page 8) . Eucalyptus here represent Australia in our world tour and in summer cannas add a South American flavour. **12**

Continue behind the **Archaeology Building** across the tarmac paths. On your left, almost clinging to the building, is a huge English Oak, *Quercus robur* **13** and a short way on, to your right is a mature specimen of the London Plane, *Platanus x acerifolia*. **14**

The paths lead you out onto Cherry Tree Hill. The gnarled old specimens of *Prunus 'Kanzan'* **15** give this road its name. Their masses of pink blossom in early summer have featured on many University pictures.

The open hillside beyond used to be the site of the Cherry Tree Buildings but now displays groups of young trees **16** including limes and cherries that will in time take over from the older plantings. Turn left and cross the road diagonally and enter a grassy area with more trees. You can see a fine spreading *Ailanthus altissima*, with huge pinnate leaves. Known as the Tree of Heaven because of its rapid growth, it originates from northern China. **17**

Nearby is a mature *Catalpa bignonioides*, which has large flat round leaves. The long seedpods produced after the white flowers give it the common name of Indian Bean Tree, although it originates



from the Gulf of Mexico. **18**

In May you will see the strange mixture of pink and yellow flowers on the *+Laburnocytisus adamii*, a curious graft hybrid originally produced from grafting together Laburnum and Broom. **19**

Going back across the main road and walking across the top of Portland Hill, we enter the **Botanic Garden**, **20** formerly a traditional range of botanical order beds. It is now a quiet retreat with some fine views across Nottingham towards the river. The open area of grass beyond the garden is the site of Keighton Medieval Village, a site of archaeological interest.

The unusual bushy plant nearby is a medlar, *Mespilus germanica*. The single apple blossom-like flowers

are followed by brown fruit, which need to be very ripe before eating. The flavour is an acquired taste! It is a native of southern Europe and Asia Minor. **21**

Further on the left is a small upright tree, *Ginkgo biloba*. Commonly called the Maidenhair tree, it is a conifer, not a fern. It is one of the few remaining plants that was growing 200 million years ago, when dinosaurs roamed the earth. It was discovered in China and has long been valued for its medicinal properties. **22**

Nearby is a bushy evergreen, *Arbutus unedo*, or the Killarney Strawberry tree. In late summer you'll see both mature fruit and flowers. Unedo means 'eat one only' because the fruits, although edible, are quite unpleasant. It grows from the Mediterranean through to Ireland. **23**

Next to the Strawberry tree is a large Southern Beech, *Nothofagus obliqua*, **24** which came from Chile in 1910. Look for the gap in the planting on the left and cross the road to the **Vale of Tears**, so called because of its collection of weeping trees. **25** The small Weeping Birch is *Betula pendula* 'Youngii', an ideal choice for small gardens.

Tree Walk

Nearby is an upright birch with chalky white bark. *Betula utilis*, the Himalayan Birch, was introduced by Sir Joseph Hooker in 1849 from western China. There are also specimens of weeping ash *Fraxinus excelsior* 'Pendula', with its shaggy umbrella shape and the weeping beech *Fagus sylvatica* 'Pendula', distinguished by large sweeping branches and pendulous twigs. Look for another beech with delicate cut leaves, the Fern-leaved Beech, or *Fagus sylvatica* 'Heterophylla'.

Walk up the hill head towards the top left of the **Visitor Car Park**. The steps lead through the courtyard of **Hugh Stewart Hall**. The golden conifers flanking the path are *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Stewartii', chosen because of the name of the hall. 26

On the right, opposite the end of the path, is a golden-leaved tulip tree, *Liriodendron tulipiferae* 'Aureomarginatum'. Also of interest are a Monkey Puzzle, *Araucaria araucana* and the Blue or Western Himalayan Pine, *Pinus wallachiana* with its long glaucous needles. 27

Walk on through the archway out of the Hugh Stewart Hall grounds,

and onto the road. The huge grassy area beyond is **The Downs** (see page 11). 28

Turn right and walk alongside The Downs. The row of large trees along the 29 tennis courts are a purple-leaved form of the common beech *Fagus sylvatica*. The graft line can be clearly distinguished half way up the trunk. Walking on to the road junction there is a small group of conifers 30 with more than 30 evergreen *Sequoiadendron giganteum* *Wellingtonia* interplanted with the deciduous *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Dawn Redwood.

Turn right at the road junction and you will see the restored rock garden 31 where our tour ends.



Visit our other campuses

The University's Jubilee Campus, which in 2013 was awarded a Green Flag, is a mile from University Park, while Sutton Bonington Campus is 10 miles south of University Park on the border of Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. A free Hopper Bus Service serves the campuses. For timetables, visit nott.ac.uk/hopper

Jubilee Campus

Wollaton Road
Nottingham
NG8 1BB
t: 0115 951 5151

Development of University Park threatened its beautiful green landscape and the University decided to build a new campus nearby, on the former home of the Raleigh bicycle factory. The derelict site lacked trees and even soil, although the University's purchase of a narrow band of land containing mature trees provided a backdrop to the development.

Jubilee Campus is an exemplar of brownfield regeneration and has impeccable green credentials. The campus was opened in October 1999 by Her Majesty the Queen and has received many awards, including the Millennium Marque Award for Environmental Excellence and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Journal Sustainability Award.

The campus is designed to harmonise buildings and landscape and to encourage wildlife. A series of lakes provide cooling for buildings and absorb storm water. Trees and shrubs are well established and wildflowers grow on the grassy mounds behind the lakes. Waterfowl including mallards, swans, coots, moorhens, geese and herons breed on the lakes. Many of the buildings have green roofs, planted with a carpet of alpine plants, to help maintain building temperatures.

Phase II of the Jubilee Campus includes new buildings across Triumph Road, and a paved boulevard linking the two sites. An avenue of 60 new *Sophora japonica*, fountains and another lake will enhance the scheme.

For maps and directions, visit nott.ac.uk/jubilee



The lakes at Jubilee Campus are a haven for wildlife.

Sutton Bonington Campus

Sutton Bonington
Leicestershire
LE12 5RD
t: 0115 951 5151

Whereas University Park and Jubilee are green oases in the city, there is also much to enjoy in the rural setting of Sutton Bonington Campus.

This 40-acre site is home to land-based sciences such as Agriculture, Plant Sciences, Food Sciences and the Veterinary School.

The campus has a wide variety of plantings, including a small

arboretum. Of particular interest is the lime avenue alongside the South Laboratory. This commemorates those lost in the First World War. There is said to be a 'Queen's shilling' buried under each tree.

A Diamond Wood was planted on University land near the campus to mark the Queen's Jubilee.

For maps and directions, visit nott.ac.uk/sutton



A carpet of wildflowers on The Downs.

Biodiversity

The University is committed to environmentally sensitive management of its grounds and University Park has its own biodiversity action plan.

Trees

We plant many trees each year, both native and exotic species.

Scrub and meadowland

These areas are not neglected — leaving some areas to scrub and allowing grassland to naturally flower and seed supports wildlife.

Peat

No peat is added to soil.

Tree surgery

Leaving dead or dying trees as bat roosts or for wood-boring birds and insects adds biodiversity.

Habitats

Prunings and felled timber are often left as habitat piles.

Recycling

Garden waste is recycled as compost or mulching materials.

Historical conservation

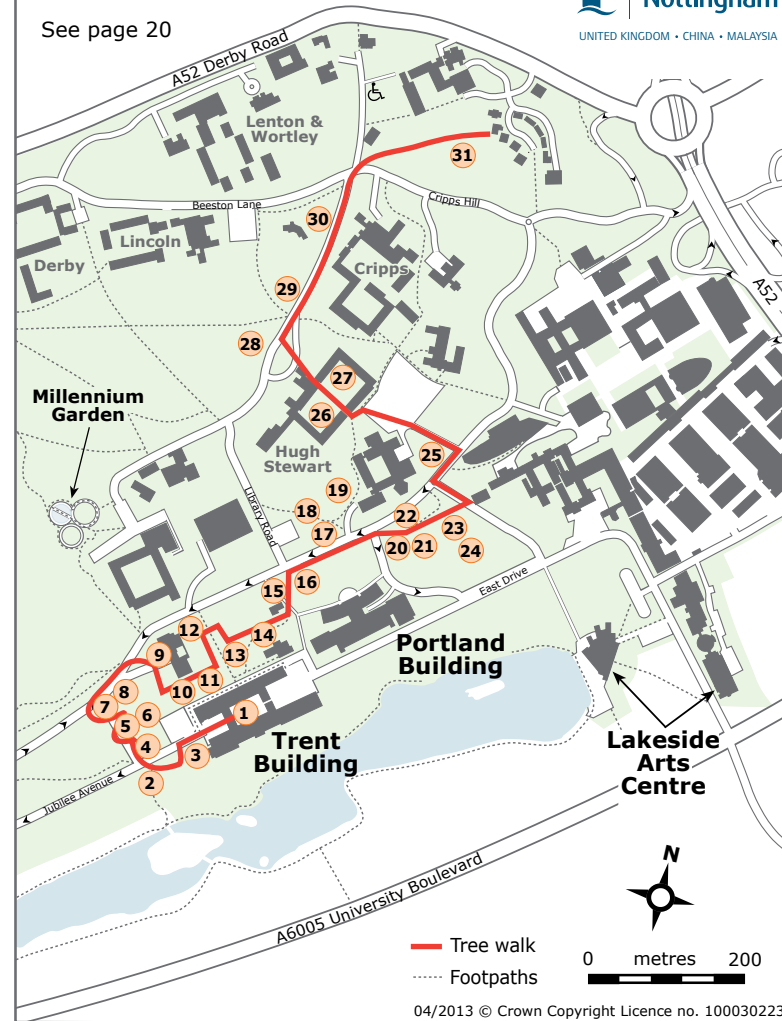
We are also committed to preserving the historic areas and buildings of University Park.

Pesticides

Pesticide use has been substantially reduced.

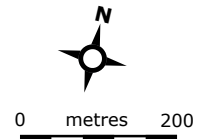
Tree Walk

See page 20



— Tree walk

..... Footpaths





The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA



The University of Nottingham has made every effort to ensure that the information in this guide was accurate when published. Please note, however, that the nature of the content means that it is subject to change from time to time, and you should therefore consider the information to be guiding rather than definitive.

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Further information

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