

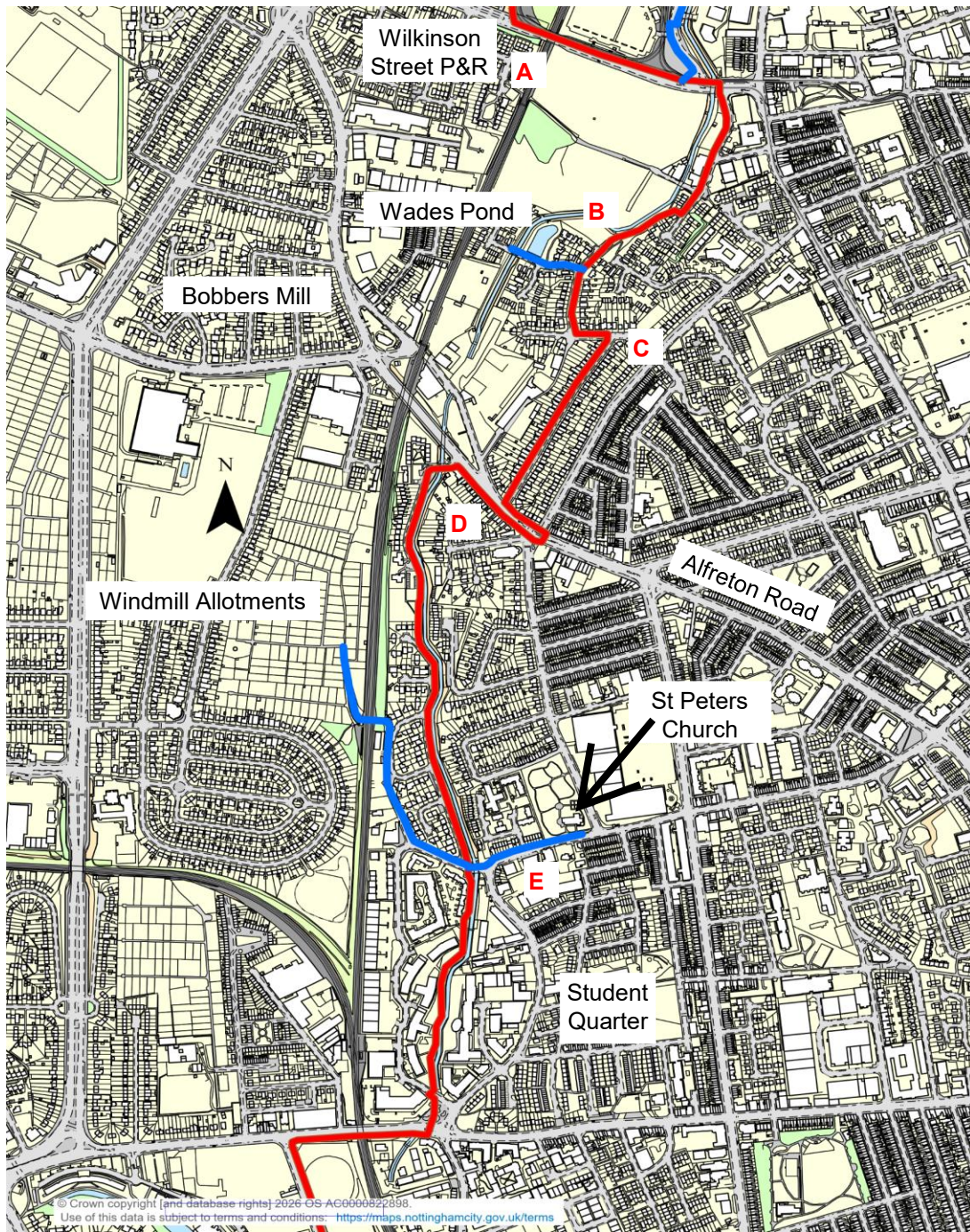
River Leen from Source to the Trent: Section 4 - Wilkinson Street to Lenton Lodge



Linear walk following the River Leen as it flows through residential and industrial areas, Nottingham’s Student Quarter and Nottingham University Jubilee Campus to reach Lenton Lodge, former gatehouse to Wollaton Hall, on Derby Road

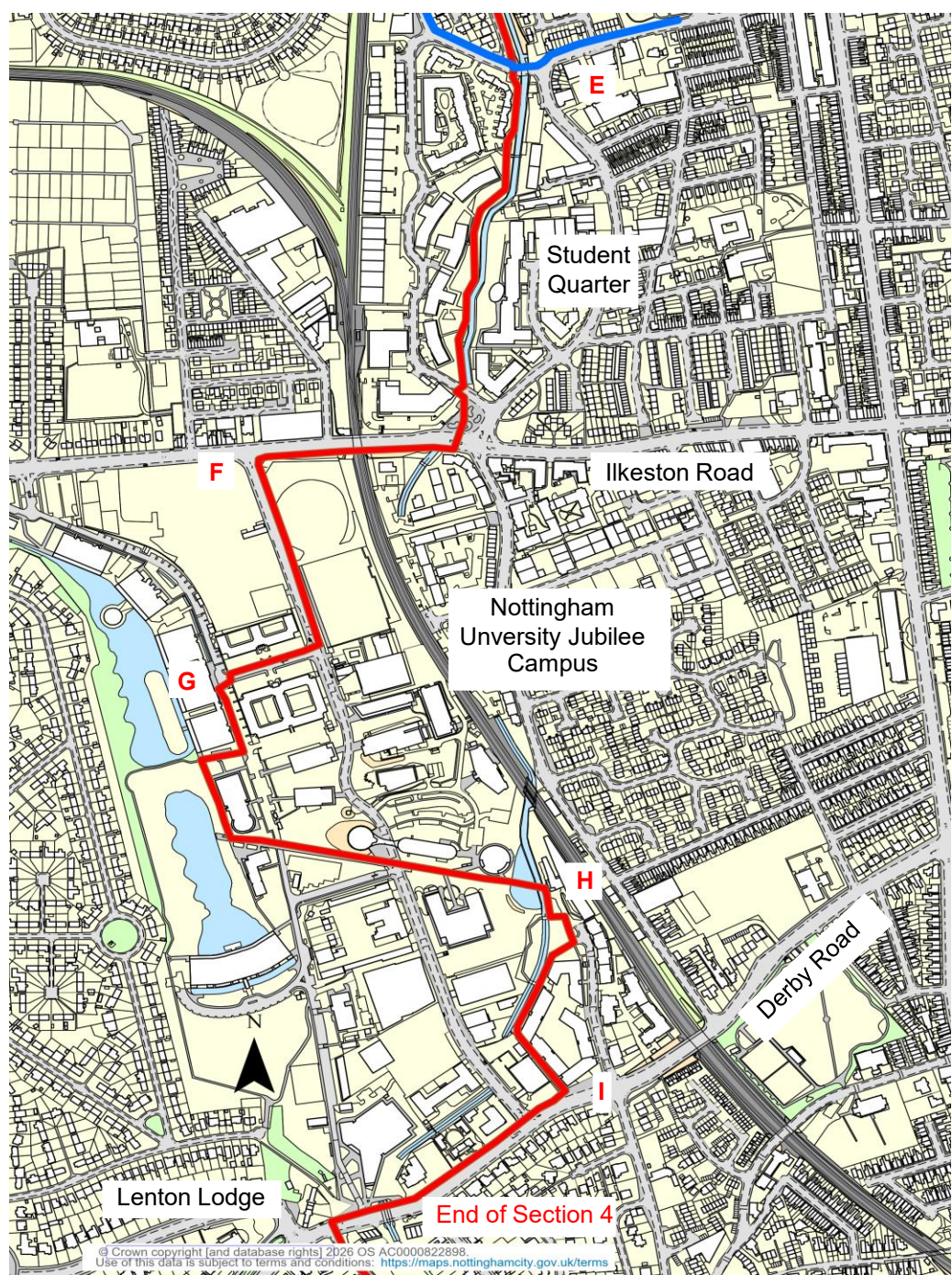
Start	Wilkinson Street Tram Stop
Finish	Lenton Lodge, Derby Road (opposite Hillside)
Distance	c 3miles/ 5km
Time	c 2 hours
Terrain	Mostly paths and pavements
Travel Information	Tram at Wilkinson Street; bus services on Alfreton Road, Ilkeston Road and Derby Road
Maps	OS Explorer 260 Nottingham; Nottingham University Jubilee Campus Site Map
Facilities	Shops & pubs at major road junctions (Alfreton Road, Ilkeston Road); cafes / restaurants on University Jubilee Campus

Photos clockwise from top left: The Leen at Wilkinson Street with tram shed in background; the Leen between Gauntley Street and Plantation Side; the Leen on Meden Gardens; Nottingham Student Quarter; Raleigh frieze and ponds in Nottingham University Jubilee Campus; the Leen in Nottingham University Jubilee Campus. The walk is on publicly accessible paths and open spaces, most of which are rights of way; some paths are on private land where public access is by permission of the owner.



Route description

- A. From north end of **Wilkinson Street Tram Stop**, cross Wilkinson Street using pedestrian refuge. Ahead as you cross is the site of the former **Cussons/ Gerard's Soap Factory**, its chimney still standing. Turn left to reach another pedestrian crossing; ahead to the left you can see **Shipstone's Brewery Buildings** and ahead up Shipstone Street a view of part of the **Birkin Factory**. A detour is possible by crossing the pedestrian crossing to follow the river Leen upstream behind the Tram Shed to where it emerges from a culvert under the railway. Our route continues on Wilkinson Street. On your right you can see the Leen emerging from under the road just before you reach **Gauntley Street**. Turn right down Gauntley Street passing the Police Building on your left to reach The Poplars. Gauntley Street continues to the right down to the Leen near the site of former "**Mill in the Hole**", owned by the dyer William Elliot. There is no through route here, so continue ahead on the Poplars and soon turn right at a public footpath sign. Follow the path with the Leen on your right to reach a road (Plantation Side). It is possible to follow the Leen a little further on the grassed area here, but there is no through access.
- B. Walk up **Plantation Side** to the first turning, Meadow Brown Road. Here detour by turning right to a bridge over the Leen which affords views of the Cussons/ Gerard's Chimney, Shipstone's Brewery and **Wade's Pond**. There is no public access along the Leen here so return and continue up Plantation Side to the junction with Darley Avenue.
- C. Plantation Side continues ahead as a path between buildings and will eventually reach Alfreton Road, but this path is in poor condition, so instead turn left, and then first right on **Chadwick Road** and follow this to reach **Alfreton Road**. To cross safely, turn left on Alfreton Road, cross Bobbers Mill Road; then cross Alfreton Road at the pedestrian crossing opposite Tescos, turn right then cross Churchfield Lane, passing **Mount Zion Pentecostal Church**, in a former art deco cinema building, to reach Poulter Close.
- D. At **Poulter Close** turn left, crossing the Leen and noticing the river flowing under Bobbers Mill bridge (**Bobbers Mill** was nearby). Follow the road (now Meden Gardens) round as it follows the Leen on your left. Where the road ends, continue ahead on the pedestrian/ cycle path, still following the Leen, passing Bobbersmill Play Area on your right (formerly the site of **Radford Colliery** Shaft). Continue ahead at the next road (Maun Avenue). Following the Leen you reach New Road. **Harrison's Mill** was near the junction of New Road and Hartley Road. **Radford Folly**, and the operations of two famous Nottingham companies **Raleigh Bicycles** and **Player's Cigarettes** were also nearby. **St Peter's Church** can be found by walking up Hartley Street from here. **Windmill Allotments** can be found by walking up New Road to a path over the railway. (*see points of interest*).



- E. Cross New Road and continue ahead on **Hilditch Way** to follow the Leen through **Nottingham Student Quarter**. At the end the Leen enters a culvert to go under Midland Way and Ilkeston Road. **Radford Corn Mill** was sited near the junction of Ilkeston Road and St Peter’s Street. Cross Midland Way on the zebra crossing, then keep ahead to cross Ilkeston Road at a pedestrian crossing. Turn right. You can see the Leen come out of the culvert on your left. Continue on Ilkeston Road over the railway to reach Triumph Road.
- F. Turn left on **Triumph Road**. You pass the **University Sports Ground** on your left. Opposite this, just past a bus stop turn right at a “Welcome to **Jubilee Campus**” sign and walk towards **The Atrium Restaurant**. Here turn left to pass the **Dearing Building**; then turn right before the **Business School South** building (at “Cycle Path to University Park” sign) to reach a grassy area with ponds/ wetland. Various paths can be explored around the ponds, and this is a pleasant area for a picnic. The **Jubilee Conference Centre** and **Spokes Café** also offer refreshments (refer to site map: [Jubilee Campus 2024](#))
- G. Our route turns left with the lakes on your right, then left again just before the **Si Yuan Centre** (signed to Radmarsh Road) to follow a path with small ponds and the **Sir Colin Campbell Building** on your left. Where the path crosses Triumph Road keep ahead, noticing the frieze that came from the wall of the entrance to the **Triumph Road Factory of Raleigh Bicycles** on your right. Continue ahead passing **GSK Carbon Neutral Laboratories** on your right and the **Ingenuity Centre** on your left, soon reaching another wetland area and the River Leen which you cross.
- H. Turn right and follow the Leen to the right of the Unite Students Building (you can keep the Leen on your right, or cross over and cross back again). Where the Leen enters another culvert by a garage, the path bears left to bring you to Derby Road.
- I. Turn right on Derby Road and pass the Toyota/ Lexus Garage. Cross Triumph Road and continue ahead passing **William Woodsend Memorial Homes (1913)**. Just past the Rose and Crown pub, near a sign to the Jubilee Campus, keep right. The Leen is culverted here under Derby Road. It is also possible to see the Leen to the right of the (Advance Manufacturing) university building here, but there is no public access. Keep ahead, passing the South Entrance to the Jubilee Campus, to finish this section in front of **Lenton Lodge**, a former gatehouse to Wollaton Hall. **Nottingham Canal** also used to flow under Derby Road here (an anchor recovered from the canal can be found on the back of the wall to the right of Lenton Lodge, just inside the Jubilee Campus).

Points of Interest

Gerard's Soap Works (/Cussons). The lone chimney, that can be seen looking west from Wilkinson Street tram stop, is all that remains of the factory of Gerard's Soap Works off Gauntley Street. The company was started by brothers Thomas and William Gerard on this site locally known as the **Mill in the Hole** which was the name of a mill that formerly stood on this site. Gerard's Soap Works was a major employer in the area manufacturing products under the Cussons brand. The Leen provided abundant water which was pumped and filtered and used for cooling and other processes before being returned to the river at a rate of 35,000 gallons an hour. The company was purchased by Cussons in 1955 and closed in 2006 when manufacturing moved overseas. [The Basford factory with a leading role in Britain's soap-making industry - Nottinghamshire Live](#)

Corn Mills along the Leen. The **Mill in the Hole** was owned by the dyer William Elliot on land near Gauntley Street that was granted to him in the 1752 enclosure award. It was one of several corn mills along the stretch of the Leen we follow in this section. **Bobber's Mill** was on the East side of the Leen just north of what is now Bobbers Mill Bridge near the old Alfreton Road. In the 12th century Simon Fitz Simon gave rent from this mill to Lenton Priory so that the monks could pray for the soul of his brother Walter de Kyme. Further downstream, near the junction of Hartley Road and St Peter's Street was **Harrison's Mill**. Harrison also owned land and a windmill near here on what is now **Windmill Allotments** (the allotments can be found by following New Road north to a path over the railway line). **Radford Mill** once stood on the junction of Ilkeston Road and St Peter's Road. It was demolished in 2008 to create student flats. These (and other!) mills are all shown on the John Chapman 1794 map of Nottinghamshire. Bobbers Mill is named on the map. [View map: Chapman, John., South-west sheet - Nottinghamshire - Counties of Scotland, 1580-1928](#)

Radford Folly. In around 1790 William Elliot (the dyer who owned the Mill in the Hole) built a house and gardens in Radford (on a site to the west of the Leen near New Street) and created an artificial lake using water from the Leen. In the middle of the lake was an island with a look-out tower which later became known as Radford Folly. After William Elliot died Charles Sutton purchased the estate and let it to a man called Parr who ran the site under the name of Radford Grove as a popular tea garden where boats could be hired on the lake in summer. It returned to a private residence when Charles Sutton resumed possession. After he died, the estate was sold to Mr Harrison whose mill bordered the property on the south side. Harrison filled in the lake. It was later sold to the Wollaton Colliery Company who also operated Radford Colliery. [Nottinghamshire history > Articles > Articles form the Transactions of the Thoroton Society > Radford Folly](#)

St Peter's Church, Radford. There has been a church on this site since at least 1200. The present church was rebuilt in 1812. William Elliot, who built Radford Folly, is buried in the church. Nottingham City Council took on the lease for the graveyard in 1992 and created a park for local people.

Raleigh Bicycles began as a small bicycle workshop on Raleigh Street in Radford in 1885 run by Richard Woodhead and Paul Angois who with Frank Bowden set up the Raleigh Cycle Company in 1888. The company rapidly expanded, occupying former mill and lace buildings, and by 1913 was the largest bicycle manufacturing company in the world. At the height of production Raleigh was making two million bicycles a year and employed 8000 workers in their factories on Triumph Road and Faraday Street. In 1931 The Howitt Building, designed for Raleigh by Thomas Cecil Howitt, was opened as their new headquarters on Lenton Boulevard. Raleigh has been part of the Netherlands based bicycle company Accell since 2012.

Players's Cigarettes. John Player and Son was a tobacco manufacturer in Nottingham founded in 1877 by John Player (who purchased a Scottish based tobacco business). He built the Castle Tobacco Factories in Radford. After his death the business was run by his sons. The company merged with Imperial Tobacco in 1901, but the "Player" brand retained (and still retains) its own identity. 8000 people were employed by the company in the 1950's. A new Nottingham factory (the "Horizon" Factory) opened on Thane Road near the Boots the Chemists site in the 1970s, replacing the Radford factories. Cigarette and tobacco manufacture ceased in Nottingham in 2016 after the Horizon factory closed. The factories on Churchfield Lane were demolished in 1987 and are now Castle Retail Park.

Radford Colliery. Wollaton and Radford Colliery were built on land belonging to Lord Middleton of Wollaton Colliery and managed jointly by the Wollaton Colliery Company.

Nottingham University Jubilee Campus

This modern purpose-built campus built on former industrial land was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1999. Its facilities now include schools of Education, Computer Science, Business and the University of Nottingham Innovation Park, as well as a sports centre and student accommodation. It is an exemplar of brownfield regeneration, with green credentials and has received a number of Awards. An important feature is a series of lakes which provide storm water attenuation and cooling for the buildings as well as supporting wildlife. There is a frieze recovered from the wall near the main entrance of the original Triumph Road factory of the Raleigh Bicycle Company and the sixty metre Aspire Sculpture was inspired by wheels, hubs and spokes. The local community are welcome to enjoy the walks and gardens and the Friends group organise a programme of events. [Jubilee Campus - The University of Nottingham](#)