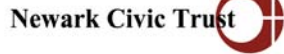


Newark Historic Riverside Trail

This is the fourth in a series of leaflets and the full range may be viewed on our website www.newarkcivictrust.org.uk

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Newark Historic Riverside Trail

Distance: 1.4km

Time: 1.5 hour. Easy trail

Start/Finish: at the bronze model of Newark in the Castle Grounds

Wheelchair & pushchair friendly

This trail covers a good deal of the riverside area upstream of Trent Bridge.

Continue along Castle Gate then, just past the next set of metal gates, turn right to follow the steps or ramp down to the riverside at Cuckstool Wharf.

The tall tower is a ventilation shaft for the stage area within (limelight gives off toxic fumes), where evening entertainment was provided for traders- as well as maximising the use of the building, socialising in this way was akin to the modern practice of meeting business associates for a round of golf.

Continue upstream to the Town Lock. Immediately to your right you will see two small locks - both disused and much smaller than the one further over, which we will come to later. William Jessop built the lock in 1772, while the extension was built in 1808. The locks were installed, along with weirs, to augment the natural depth of the river, thus providing for bigger barges.

Opposite the point where the two locks meet is a private house, also dating from 1772, which was the original **lock-keeper's cottage** (4). A quaint café

now occupies the second lock keeper's cottage - built when the lock was extended and the first cottage proved too small.

Just past the older cottage, look for a passage entry on your left. Follow this and look out for the dog mural made of bricks. Take the turning to the right just before this and continue to arrive in Navigation Yard. To your front is a large warehouse and **industrial unit** (5). It still bears the legend *Newark Egg Packers*, for a company which in addition to packing eggs, a task performed in a smaller building nearby, used the larger one in front of you for warehousing and to house a provender mill and a bagging plant producing pig and poultry feeds.

For centuries this was a hive of industry, with warehouses and maltings enjoying immediate access to the river; you passed one of the **maltings** (2), long since converted to housing, on your left as you descended. Until 1801, the area by the river also accommodated the *cuckstool* or ducking stool, a popular punishment for scolds and for merchants who gave short measure - both genders were eligible but women were predominantly the victims!

Turn left to move upstream. The ornate building high up on the left is the **Corn Exchange** (3), built in 1847 to a design by London architect Henry Duesbury. Its grandeur serves as a memorial to the success and scale of the trade in grain, in particular barley for malting and brewing.

Start the route at the bronze model of Newark in the Castle Grounds and then leave via the iron gates, turning right to walk along Castle Gate. To your right you soon find another set of gates leading to **The Gilstrap Centre** (1) - opened in 1883 as the town's first free public library. It was the gift of Sir William Gilstrap; originally a very successful hotelier, he turned to malting when the arrival of the railways spelt the end of the coaching trade. At one time, a cattle market occupied part of the castle grounds. The cattle market was moved to the far side of the river in 1885 - a site we will visit further on in this trail.

The River Trent and its Devon tributary have played an important role in Newark's life for many centuries. Before highways, canals, railways and finally motor transport were established, the rivers were the only practical means to transport large and heavy goods over long distances; rivers also provided access to the sea for international trade. Newark was built at the lowest fording point on the Trent, which was eventually protected by the castle and then bridged, so it was natural that it should become a centre for river-borne commerce, particularly trading in wool. The river banks hosted a thriving inland port with wharves, warehouses, mills, maltings and breweries bringing people, employment and wealth to the town. This trail covers a good deal of the riverside area upstream of Trent Bridge.



