

## Bestwood Park and Mill Lakes – a natural haven from modern life



The 650 acres that make up Bestwood Park are bursting with unusual and rare wildlife, yet it is only a short tram ride from the fast-pace of the city.

From the waterbirds of Mill Lakes and meadows full of wildflowers, to ancient oak woodland and a reclaimed pit, Bestwood has a landscape which reflects the varied history of Nottinghamshire itself. The Winding Engine House, a splendid piece of industrial archaeology, is a memorial to the coal mining industry once so important to our economy. During the late 1880's Bestwood Colliery grew rapidly and continued coal production until 1967.

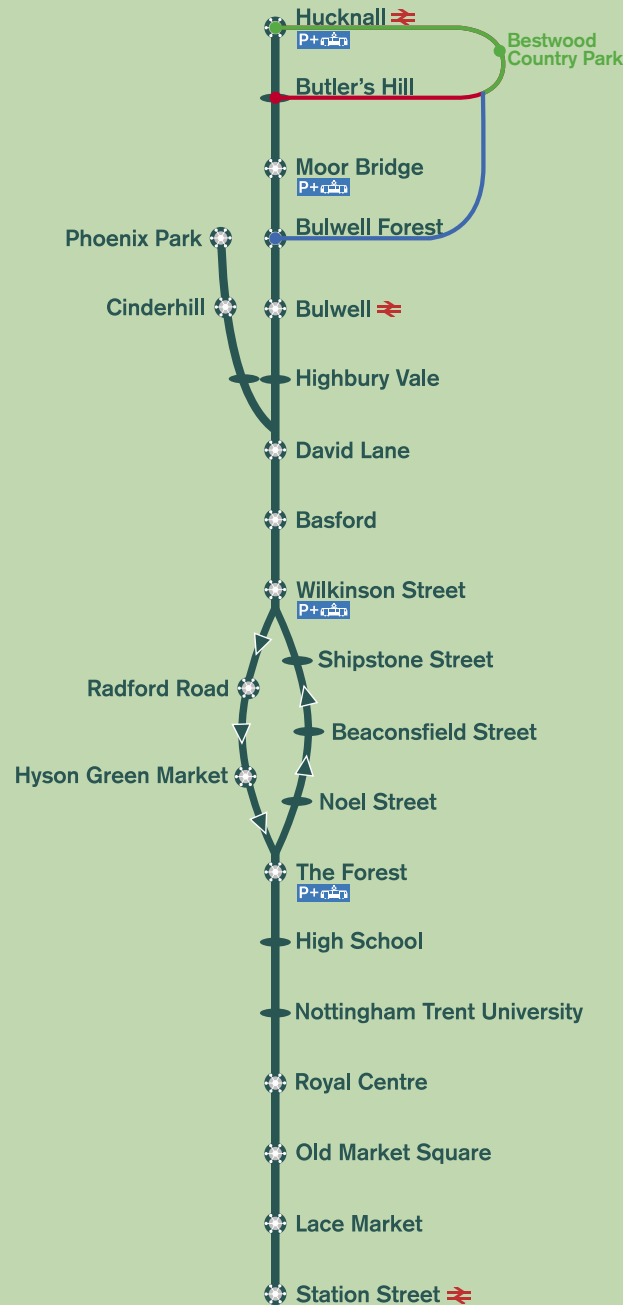


Originally part of the medieval Sherwood Forest and a hunting preserve of 3,711 acres, the park was enclosed in 1351 to be used for royal entertainments. Alexandra Lodge was built in 1877 and following restoration work, is now used by the Park Ranger service.

Currently, Bestwood Country Park is jointly managed by Nottinghamshire County Council and Gedling Borough Council, who have made extensive improvements and restoration work to the park. There are a huge network of signed footpaths and horse trails and part of the National Cycle Network route now runs through. The former colliery site and the pit tip have been completely re-landscaped and important conservation areas are also designated within the park.



The park today receives over 400,000 visitors annually, who enjoy Bestwood's wide range of natural features and diverse wildlife habitats, including wood, heath and grassland, ponds, lakes and wetland. The park contains 20 out of 24 key habitats, 8 of which are nationally important.



**Starting at Hucknall Tram Stop**, following the **Green Route**, walk up the steps to the railway bridge and turn right onto Wigwam Lane.

Follow this, with **Leen Valley Golf Course** on your left, under the railway bridge and cross over the stile. Head anti-clockwise around the lake turning left at the railway bridge and continue on the footpath until you reach Papplewick Road. Cross the road and when you reach a cul-de-sac called The Spinney; walk to the end. Follow the footpath across two fields and cross the stile. Head left along the lane for about 120 metres (away from Bestwood village), past the **Old Rectory** to the entrance of **Bestwood Park**. From here you can explore the delights of the park and **Big Wood** by way of many paths.

To head home again, you can either follow the **Red Route** north, taking in the beautiful **Mill Lakes** and returning to **Butler's Hill** tram stop; or the **Blue Route** south, along the disused railway line to **Bulwell Forest** tram stop.

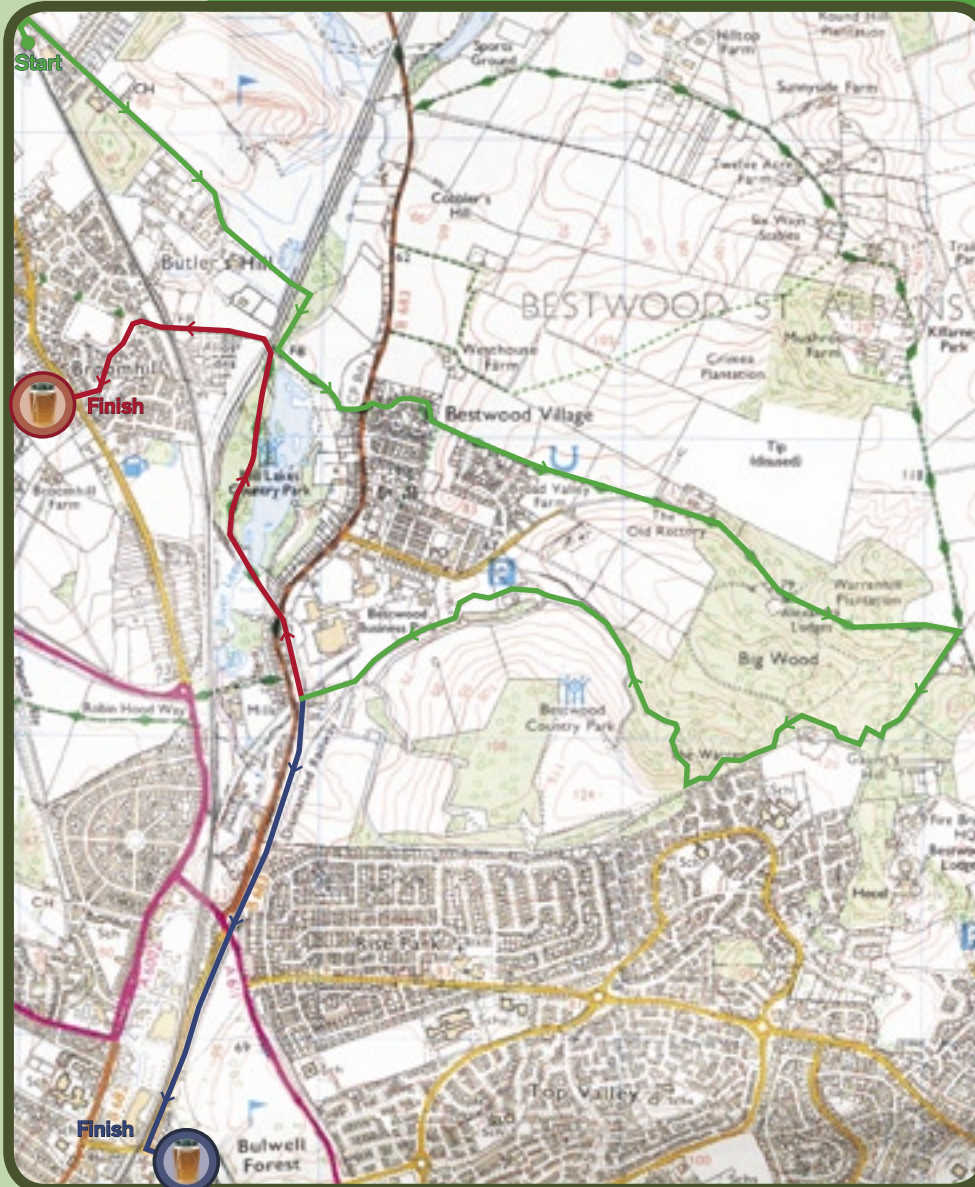
Head out of the park, when you reach the disused railway line, from here, you can take either route.

## Red Route

Head north along the disused railway and through **Mill Lakes**. Then follow the **Bestwood** footpath across the railway line and along to **Butler's Hill**. The **Bowman** pub is along **Nottingham Road** on the left.

## Blue Route

Continue south along the railway until you reach **Bulwell Forest**. To reach the **Newstead Abbey** pub, head along **Bestwood Road** to the junction, turn left and continue to **Nottingham Road**. Turn left and the pub is 20m on the left.



After a long day walking, why not end your route at one of our CAMRA recommended Beer by Tram pubs.

## Red Route: Bowman

Tram Stop: Butler's Hill



## Blue Route: Newstead Abbey

Tram Stop: Bulwell Forest

