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# Welcome to Nottinghamshire



## Media Pack 2016



[www.experiennottinghamshire.com](http://www.experiennottinghamshire.com)



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**IN NOTTS WE LOVE  
THE UNDERGROUND**  
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# A friendly welcome

We love arranging visits for journalists – smell the scents, see the sights and delight in the tastes of Nottinghamshire with us!

Whether you are reporting for a national newspaper or a niche online publication, we understand the importance of meeting deadlines and providing exclusive story content and ideas.

We have expertise and knowledge when it comes to telling stories from across the county; we are up to date on news from the local tourism industry and can provide creative story suggestions for your use.

From history and heritage, weekend breaks, family holidays, food experiences, group leisure or any other travel experiences in Nottinghamshire, the Experience Nottinghamshire team is on hand to make your experience as easy as possible.

**Best wishes,**

**Linda Parker**

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A TASTY BREW**  
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# About Nottinghamshire...



Known around the world as the home of Robin Hood, Nottinghamshire is a diverse county full of tales to tell. From idyllic rural countryside and gentle rolling hills, to the mighty River Trent and ancient oak forests, our landscapes are just waiting to be explored, whatever the season.

Discover a county rich in legend and stories, which has inspired storytellers for centuries, including rebellious writers DH Lawrence, Alan Sillitoe and Lord Byron.

From its bloody history as the start and end point for the English Civil War, to being crowned the lace capital of the world during the Industrial Revolution, you'll be enthralled by heritage of our great county.

Located in the heart of England, you'll find the thriving city of Nottingham in the south of the county, and grand Ducal estates and rural countryside in the north.

New attractions include the National Civil War Centre in Newark and the National Videogame Arcade in Nottingham – both are the first of their kind, and a great reason to visit. Plans are also underway for major additions to Nottingham Castle, with funding secured for a new visitor centre celebrating Nottinghamshire's history of rebellion and our most famous son, Robin Hood.

You'll find Robin lives on across the county, from the ancient oaks at Sherwood Forest, to exhibitions and walking tours celebrating his legend in Nottingham city centre.

Come and make some new friends here in Nottinghamshire, we can't wait to meet you.

Recent figures from a 2014 report shows that the value of tourism in Nottinghamshire is worth £1.6bn to the local economy, an increase of 16.3% from 2009, and the number of visitors to the county reached more than 32 million. We'd love to show you why tourism to Nottinghamshire is on the increase.

Enjoy your visit – we know you will. Where to start is your choice....



# IN NOTTS WE LOVE TO DANCE

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## Looking ahead...

### Stay in Lord Byron's backyard

Following its opening in March 2016, visitors can now stay in the original [Gardener's Cottage](#) in the beautiful grounds of Newstead Abbey, once the home of the romantic poet Lord Byron. Set within the heart of the grounds, the Gardener's Cottage is a charming Grade II listed cottage overlooking the original Rose Garden, refurbished to a very high standard while still retaining original features such as wooden floorboards and beautiful stone mullion windows. The Gardener's Cottage sleeps up to six people, with two double bedrooms, and also has its own private walled courtyard, perfect for an alfresco breakfast or a glass of wine after a day exploring rural Nottinghamshire. Newstead Abbey is a visitor attraction known for its beautiful formal gardens, set over 300 acres and including a Japanese Garden, Walled Garden, Rose Garden and Spanish Garden. January 2016.

### National Videogame Arcade



The world's first cultural centre for gaming, the [National Videogame Arcade](#) (NVA), opened in Nottingham in March 2015, bringing hands-on experiences of videogames and videogame culture under one roof in a way that's never been seen before. The £2.5m project has been organised by GameCity, and across five floors will feature...

- Four gallery floors, which will exhibit quarterly exhibitions featuring new and specially-commissioned works.
- A floor dedicated to education, where students of all ages can get hands-on experience of game-making
- A permanent exhibition of treasures from the National Videogame Archive. Run in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University and the Science Museum, the National Videogame Archive is the UK's national collection of video game history and ephemera, with over 12,000 objects.

### Visit the UK's newest City of Literature

Nottingham was announced as the newest UNESCO [City of Literature](#) in December 2015, so 2016 is the ideal time to visit the UK's newest City of Literature. Plan a literary themed break, and visit the former home of controversial author DH Lawrence, or the beautiful Bromley House Library, which celebrates its 200<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2016. Stay at the newly opened Gardener's Cottage self catering accommodation, in the grounds of Newstead Abbey – once the grand home of romantic poet Lord Byron, or plan a city break to Nottingham for the Festival of Words in October 2016.



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### National Civil War Centre

In May 2015, the UK's first ever [National Civil War Centre](#) opened in Newark. The £5.4m centre is a flagship project by Newark and Sherwood District Council and will be housed in the Grade II\* Old Magnus Building which began life as a Tudor grammar school. The centrepiece theme is the deadly struggles for power in 17th century Britain during the British Civil Wars. The struggle to control Newark, a staunchly Royalist town, was one of the defining events of the Civil War. It was near here that King Charles I surrendered to the Scots Army which was allied to the Roundheads. [www.civilwarnewark.co.uk](http://www.civilwarnewark.co.uk)



### Malt Cross

[The Malt Cross Music Hall](#) secured over £1.38 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and in October 2014 re-opened after major refurbishment, including the opening of previously hidden caves beneath the historic venue. Malt Cross is a wonderful old Victorian music hall that is considered to be one of Nottingham's greatest hidden historical gems, originally built in 1877. The money was used to renovate and restore the building to its former glory, while also providing new space in the currently unused basement levels for arts and crafts workshops, music rehearsal space and a new and improved art gallery. [www.maltcross.com](http://www.maltcross.com)

### The Harley Gallery new opening

The new [Harley Gallery](#) on the Welbeck Estate opened in March 2016 – it provides a new permanent home for the Portland Collection, amassed by the Dukes of Portland over centuries, and not previously on public display. With more than 11,000 items in total, it's a collection of huge significance, and the new gallery will feature items including a Michelangelo not seen in public for 50 years, a pearl earring worn by Charles I at his execution and a number of miniatures. Also within walking distance is Creswell Crags, a limestone gorge home to some of Britain's only known Ice Age art: So the two combined make for a very interesting arts destination in 2016, in the beautiful setting of rural north Nottinghamshire. <http://www.harleygallery.co.uk/portland-collection/new-gallery/>

### Nottingham Castle

[Nottingham Castle](#), a magnificent 17th century ducal mansion, will receive £12.9 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, part of a £24 million makeover and given a redevelopment to transform it into a major heritage attraction and bring its amazing 1,000 history to life. The transformation is expected to be completed by 2019. [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/castletransformation](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/castletransformation)



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### Dinosaurs from China

In summer 2017, a unique dinosaur exhibition will come to Wollaton Hall in Nottingham, featuring fossils and specimens never before seen outside of Asia. The exhibition includes the best preserved dinosaur fossils from anywhere in the world, not just the bones, but also soft parts including skin and feathers. Many of the species are new to science, only discovered and named in the last 20 years, and some as recently as 2015. Highlights will include rare specimens such as the Gigantoraptor – the largest feathered dinosaur ever found – and the flying Microraptor – a close relative of the Velociraptor. A Nottinghamshire Festival of Dinosaurs will support the exhibition, with dinosaur themed events and exhibitions to complement this major new display.



<http://news.experiencenottinghamshire.com/worlds-largest-feathered-dinosaur-coming-to-nottinghams-wollaton-hall/>

### Welbeck is the 'Creme de la Creme'

Beautiful Welbeck Abbey in the north of Nottinghamshire is enjoying primetime exposure, thanks to being the setting for the new BBC2 TV series: Bake Off Creme de la Creme. This historic private home is open in August, giving visitors the chance to see all its glory first hand on one of the exclusive State Room Tours. Book tickets for the August 2016 tours at

<http://www.welbeck.co.uk/experience/visit/welbeck-abbey-state-room-tours>



# Ten things to do...



## 1. National Civil War Centre

Step back in history and witness the deadly struggles for power in 17th century Britain. The UK's first ever National Civil War Centre is set to open in Newark in spring 2015, reviving memories of the three sieges it endured during the British Civil Wars. Nottinghamshire played a central role during the conflicts, with the riots starting at Nottingham Castle. Set to open in spring 2015. <http://www.nationalcivilwarcentre.com/>

## 2. Nottingham Castle

Set high upon the Castle Rock and commanding spectacular views over the city, Nottingham Castle is not to be missed. The impressive 17th century ducal mansion now stands as a municipal museum, the first of its kind outside London, housing beautiful works from around the world. Enjoy a tour which includes the labyrinth of secret caves and tunnels underground. [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottinghamcastle](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottinghamcastle)

## 3. City of Caves

A well kept secret is that Nottingham is built on more than 500 man-made, sandstone caves dating back to medieval times. Descend far below street level and discover how the caves were used as tanneries, bomb shelters and homes from the expert guides or on an audio tour, promising a walk around a shopping centre like no other. <http://www.cityofcaves.com/>

## 4. School Of Artisan Food

Foodie lovers are in for a treat in Nottinghamshire. The School of Artisan Food is the UK's only not-for-profit school dedicated to artisan food, and recently named Cookery School of the Year at the British Cookery School Awards 2014. It offers an opportunity for people of all skill levels to expand their knowledge through a wide range of courses. <http://www.schoolofartisanfood.org/>

## 5. Newstead Abbey

Set in more than 300-acres of parkland, Newstead Abbey was once home to romantic poet Lord Byron. Explore his ancestral home, which has been preserved intact and contains many of his belongings and his original bed. December 2015 will mark 200 years since the





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birth of Byron's daughter, the pioneering mathematician Ada Lovelace, who is buried alongside her father in Nottingham. <http://www.newsteadabbey.org.uk/>

### 6. Nottingham Contemporary

Set in Nottingham's historic Lace Market area, Nottingham Contemporary is one of the largest contemporary art centres in the UK. It hosts a number of exhibitions each year from leading contemporary artists from around the world. Along with four galleries, there is a performance and film space and a Cafe Bar and it is free to visit.

<http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/>

### 7. Sherwood Forest & Major Oak

Internationally linked to the legend of Robin Hood, Sherwood Forest is a 450-acre country park which incorporates beautiful birch trees alongside more than 1,000 veteran oaks, including the Major Oak, recently awarded Tree of the Year by Woodland Trust. Numerous events and festivals take place throughout the year, and a cycling or walking trip comes highly recommended. [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/sherwoodcp](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/sherwoodcp)

### 8. Wollaton Hall & Deer Park

Set within a 500-acre deer park, Wollaton Hall is a spectacular Elizabethan mansion and was chosen by Warner Bros as the set of Wayne Manor in 2012 *The Dark Knight Rises* Batman film. Built by Sir Francis Willoughby as a home for his family and now holds the city's Natural History Museum, it is a popular tourist attraction and a local-love.

[www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/wollatonhall](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/wollatonhall)

### 9. Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem

Enjoy a pint of tasty real ale and divine food whilst sat in a cave at the oldest Inn in England. The pub is an attraction in itself and draws tourists from around the world who are fascinated by its rich history. Sat at the foot of Nottingham Castle, there are numerous ghost stories about visitors who never left. <http://triptojerusalem.com/>

### 10. Galleries of Justice Museum

Based at Nottingham's old courthouse and gaol, there is no better way to explore the gruesome history of crime and punishment than with one of their tours. Put your family on trial in the Victorian law court and venture down below street level into the cells and dungeons to hear about the terrible conditions endured by the prisoners. <http://www.galleriesofjustice.org.uk/>





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# Story ideas

## Robin Hood lives!

[Robin Hood's legend](#) lives on in Nottinghamshire. From visiting the [Major Oak](#) in [Sherwood Forest](#), said to be the hiding place of Robin and his Merry Men, to meeting Robin Hood himself on a [walking tour of Nottingham city](#). The county is rich in the history of this world-famous legend. For Robin Hood fans, don't miss the [Robin Hood Festival](#), [Robin Hood Beer and Cider Festival](#) and [Robin Hood Pageant](#). Visitors can also try archery in Sherwood Forest and pose with one of the many Robin Hood statues around the county.

## Stay in Sherwood Forest

Plan a visit to Sherwood Forest and stay in a luxurious cabin hidden amid the trees, home to the legendary Major Oak, recently named 'England's Tree of the Year' by Woodland Trust. [The Sherwood Hideaway](#) and [Forest Holidays](#) both offer visitors the opportunity to stay in a secluded setting that is ideal for romantic escapes, family holidays and luxury short breaks, and many with their own private hot tub.

## Creative culture

Nottinghamshire is home to a large number of artists and creative industry members. It is the home of fashion designer [Sir Paul Smith](#) and visitors can still visit his original store in the heart of Nottingham on Byard Lane. It is also home to world-class art galleries including [Nottingham Contemporary](#), [Nottingham Castle](#), [New Art Exchange](#), [Lakeside Arts Centre](#) and the [Harley Gallery](#). Throughout the year, visitors will be spoilt for choice when they come to Nottinghamshire, with a rich programme of cultural events at theatres, galleries, country parks and cinemas.

## Paw-tastic Notts

With an abundance of forests and parkland to explore, Nottinghamshire loves dogs! Stay in a dog friendly room at [Hart's Hotel](#), perfect for a city break, or stay in a luxurious woodland cabin in the heart of Sherwood Forest at [Forest Holidays](#). After a long day of exploring, pull up a seat and tuck into tasty food at dog friendly pubs; [Prince Rupert](#) and [Horse & Groom](#).



## A city of caves

Nottingham is built upon a bed of soft sandstone and to date has over 500 man-made caves beneath its streets. Visitors can experience these caves with a visit to the [City of Caves](#) attraction, [Nottingham Castle's caves](#) or enjoy a pint of tasty ale in a cave at [Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem](#) or [Hand & Heart](#).



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## Literary legends

Nottinghamshire has been home to a number of literary legends over the years. Most famously the romantic poet, [Lord Byron](#), lived here, and visitors today can still see his ancestral home at [Newstead Abbey](#) and [Colwick Hall](#). [D.H. Lawrence](#) also called Nottinghamshire home, and you can find out more about his life and writing at the award-winning [D.H. Lawrence Heritage Centre](#) in Eastwood. Other famous writers include [Alan Sillitoe](#).

## Explore outdoors

Nottinghamshire is home to wonderful green spaces and visitors can experience a range of activities including walking, segway experiences, archery, paintballing, falconry, kayaking, white water rafting and boating. [Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve](#), [Rufford Abbey Country Park](#) and [Wollaton Hall & Deer Park](#) are three of the leading attractions in the county, with a wealth of places to explore outside. A cycling trip in Nottinghamshire is another popular experience and visitors can enjoy an abundance of set routes, depending on your level of cycling experience. If you have no wheels, it's not a problem as cycle hire is available at [Sherwood Pines Forest Park](#), [Clumber Park](#), [Holme Pierrepont Country Park](#), [home of The National Water Sports Centre](#), and at many points across the city, including Nottingham Tourism Centre, in Smithy Row.



## National Trust

Nottinghamshire is home to three very special National Trust sites. Discover the untouched family home of a 1920s grocer at [Mr Straw's House](#) in Worksop. Experience the hard daily life of a Victorian at [The Workhouse](#) in Southwell, the last complete workhouse in existence. Explore beautiful [Clumber Park](#), 3,000 acres of parkland and forest. This former Ducal estate is home to a Victorian Walled Kitchen Garden, fine dining restaurant, beautiful lake and much more.

## Food, glorious food

Foodie lovers are in for a treat in Nottinghamshire. We are one of only three counties which are allowed to produce the award-winning Stilton cheese, or why not try Nottinghamshire's local Colwick cheese which was recently reintroduced to the UK market. Southwell is famous as the home of the Bramley apple and its heritage is celebrated at the annual [Bramley Apple Festival](#) in October. We are also home to many award winning eateries including [MemSaab](#) and [Delilah Fine Foods](#), as well as the [School of Artisan Food](#), recently named Cookery School of the Year at the British Cookery School Awards 2014.





## IN NOTTS WE LOVE TO RALEIGH AROUND

*Nottingham, where great events happen*



### Ice Age relics

[Creswell Crags](#) in Nottinghamshire is home to evidence of the Ice Age way of life, including Ice Age art and a number of relics. This beautiful limestone gorge can be explored at your own leisure, or on one of the Ice Age or Rock Art tours. Creswell Crags is also home to the Robin Hood Cave, said to be another hideout of Nottinghamshire's famous legend.

### Nottinghamshire for families

Nottinghamshire has some fantastic family-friendly attractions, for all ages and for all weather. Visit the [Galleries of Justice Museum](#) to be entertained and educated on an actor led tour of Nottingham's horrible history, get up close to thousands of friendly animals at [White Post Farm](#) and venture to a family packed day at the all-weather [Wheelgate Theme Park](#). Explore [Sherwood Forest](#) and the mighty Major Oak, and visit [Nottingham Contemporary](#), one of the largest contemporary art centres in the UK, shortlisted for a family friendly museum award in 2012.

### Antiques and vintage

Nottinghamshire covers some 2,160 square kilometres, an impressive statistic when you're considering a shopaholic staycation. [Newark International Antique & Collectors' Fair](#) is the largest event of its kind in Europe and held several times a year, attracting thousands of dealers and buyers from around the globe. The beautiful market town of [Newark](#) is the ideal destination for antiques and vintage shopping, with an extensive independent offer. Discover Nottingham's Creative Quarter, centred around the historic Lace Market and Hockley, and be inspired by handmade gifts and original Nottingham lace at [Debbie Bryan](#) – you are sure to find that unique piece in one of the vintage shops in Notts.

### Re-ignite the romance

Treat your own Maid Marian or Robin Hood with the perfect romantic adventure to Nottinghamshire. Hand-in-hand visit [Clumber Park](#), recently voted the most romantic place in the East Midlands. Become a real life Tarzan and Jane at [Go Ape at Sherwood Pines](#), enjoying views of the forest below whilst swinging between trees, or if a divine three course dinner is your desire, [World Service](#) in the centre of Nottingham is perfect for a fine dining experience. You can choose to stay at one of Nottinghamshire's most luxurious hotels and B&Bs; a penthouse room with glorious city views at [St James Hotel](#) or a rural retreat at [Browns of Holbeck](#).





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# Nottinghamshire Fact File

## Love local

- The [largest antique fair in Europe](#) is held in [Newark](#) six times a year.
- To date, there are over 500 manmade sandstone [caves](#) underneath the city of Nottingham.
- Nottingham reputedly is home to more bars, pubs, cafes and restaurants per square mile than any other city in Europe – you'll be spoilt for choice.
- Situated in the heart of the [Old Market Square](#) in Nottingham is the largest pedestrianised square of its kind in the UK, after London's Trafalgar Square.
- [Laxton village](#) near Newark is the last European village still practising an open field medieval farming system.
- Some great creations came from Nottingham such as tarmac, traffic lights and ibuprofen just to name a few.
- Famous Nottingham pharmaceutical brand Boots opened their first store on Goosegate in Nottingham in 1849.

## Explore outdoors

- [Nottingham Arboretum](#) is said to have been the inspiration for [JM Barrie's](#) Neverland in his renowned tale of Peter Pan.
- [Creswell Crags](#) near Worksop is the home to some of the most important Ice Age finds in Britain.
- [Sherwood Forest](#) is home to 1,000 ancient oak trees, each of them over 500 years old.
- [Clumber Park](#) in Nottinghamshire is home to the longest avenue of Lime Trees in Europe – a spectacular sight in autumn.
- Inspiration behind J RR Tolkien's mythology Lord of the Rings stories came from Gedling Country Park in Nottingham.



## Sporting & Cultural Inspiration

- Indian sculptor, Anish Kapoor's first outdoor sculpture piece lives outside the [Nottingham Playhouse](#). The Sky Mirror is a dramatic steel sculpture not to be missed!
- The [New Art Exchange](#) is the largest gallery dedicated to African, African-Caribbean and South Asian art outside of London.
- Nottingham is home to the World's Oldest Professional football club – Notts [County](#) formed in 1862.
- The stadiums of Nottingham's two professional football clubs, Nottingham Forest and Notts County, are closer together than any others in England (418 metres).



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- The [National Ice Centre](#) in Nottingham is home to Great Britain's speed skating team, as well as the GMB Nottingham Panthers Ice Hockey team – always a great night out!
- Nottingham Contemporary is one of the largest contemporary art centres in the UK and hosts a number of exhibitions each year from leading contemporary artists from around the world. Plus it is free to visit.



### What Legends Are Made Of

- The [Major Oak](#) in [Sherwood Forest](#) is supposedly the hideout of Robin Hood and his Merry Men, and in 2014 was named 'England's Tree of the Year' by the Woodland Trust.
- Grab a photo in front of the [Robin Hood statue](#) outside [Nottingham Castle](#). The statue celebrated its 60th birthday in 2012 – coinciding with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.
- [Newstead Abbey](#) was the ancestral home of romantic poet [Lord Byron](#) and his remains now rest in Hucknall.
- Fashion guru, [Sir Paul Smith](#), started his successful fashion business on Byard Lane in Nottingham. Visit his impressive store at Willoughby House or pop into [Broadway Cinema](#) to check out Screen 4 – designed by Sir Paul Smith in true signature style.
- [D.H. Lawrence](#) was born and raised in Eastwood – the [D.H. Lawrence Heritage Museum](#) is a testament to his life and work.
- [Southwell](#) is home to a 12<sup>th</sup> Century Minster, [Southwell Minster](#), with spectacular medieval carvings.
- King Charles I started the Civil War near Nottingham Castle, surrendered at Newark and confined at Southwell.

# Useful information

## Fact box

- ✓ Situated at the heart of the UK, the proximity of the M1, A1, A52 and A46 means the county is easily accessible by car, while speedy rail links run from Nottingham to much of the UK.
- ✓ Nottingham is less than two hours by train from London St Pancras International station.
- ✓ The Georgian market town of Newark is just over one hour from London Kings Cross train station.
- ✓ Nottinghamshire is also served by the award-winning East Midlands Airport, which connects Nottinghamshire to over 90 destinations worldwide.
- ✓ **Website:** [www.experiencenottinghamshire.com](http://www.experiencenottinghamshire.com)
- ✓ **Blog:** [news.experiencenottinghamshire.com](http://news.experiencenottinghamshire.com)
- ✓ **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/lovenotts](http://www.facebook.com/lovenotts)
- ✓ **Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/experiencenotts](http://www.twitter.com/experiencenotts)
- ✓ **Business Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/ExpNottsBiz](http://www.twitter.com/ExpNottsBiz)

## Media resources

Information, images and itineraries are available online:

<http://news.experiencenottinghamshire.com/newsroom>

## Foreign language content

We have dedicated foreign language available, including downloadable PDFs, in [Polish](#), [Italian](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Japanese](#), [Mandarin](#) and [Russian](#).

## Media contacts

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