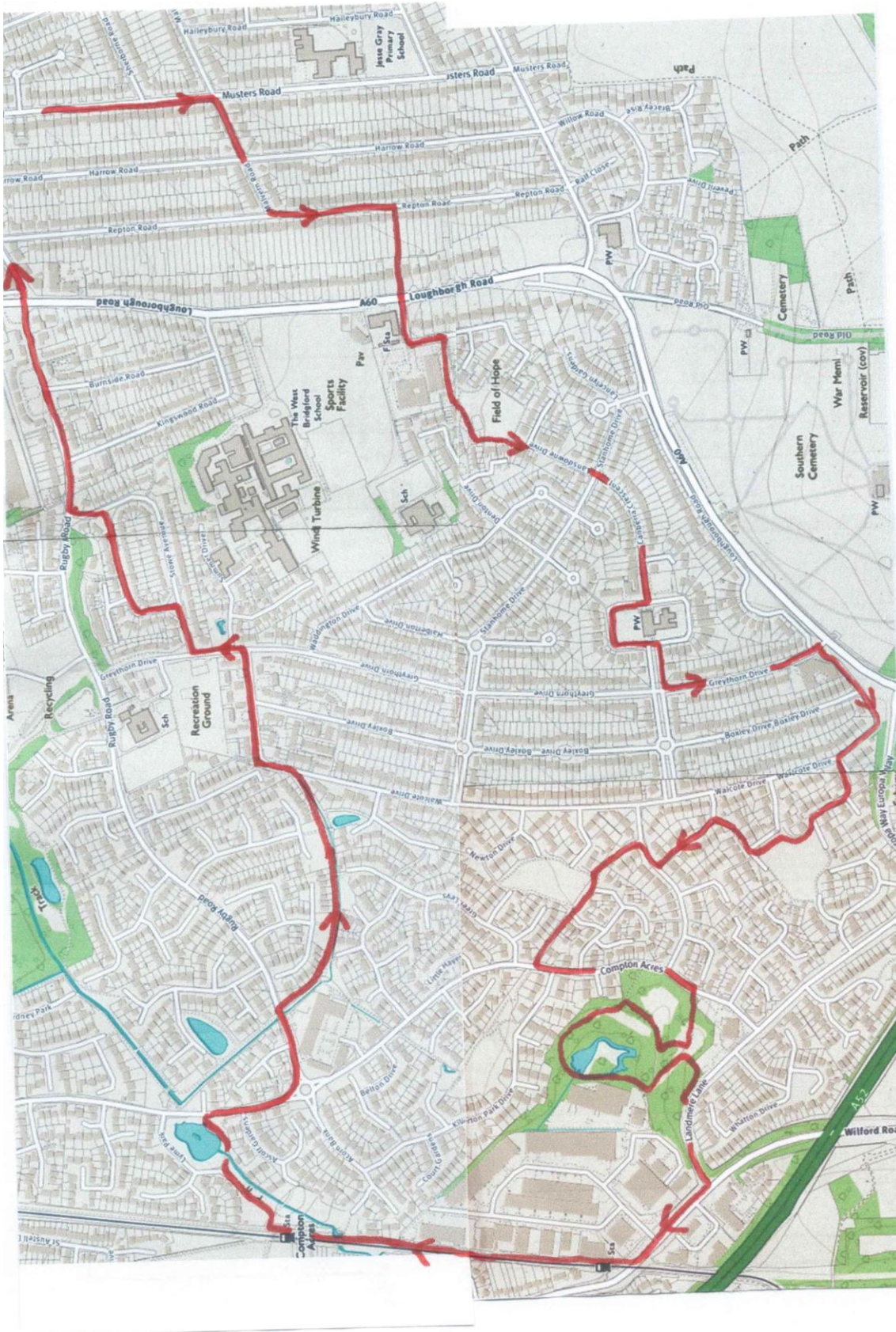


Walk No 7: Wilford Claypit

8th & 19th June 2020

Walk No 7 goes through parts of the Wilford Hill residential area to Wilford Claypit Nature Reserve and back; about 8km.



The Wilford Hill residential area has a number of green areas and many twitchels, or jitties, between the streets. This walk uses some of them so you see bits of the area that you will not see in a car.

Go up Musters Road, right into Malvern Road, left into Repton Road and then go right, down a twitchel, and cross over Loughborough Road by the Fire Station.

The station has one fire engine and 29 firefighters, including Watch Managers, Crew Managers and a Station Officer.

This is also the location for the Incident Response Unit (IRU); a vehicle used for mass decontamination of both the public and firefighters at major incidents. It is also now a Police Station.



Go up and left along Swithland Drive and then right, along the path beside Heymann Primary and Nursery School. The first school, off Waddington Drive, was opened in 1959. The new building here was opened in 2014, on the site of West Bridgford House (offices and a day care centre, now completely closed and demolished/about to be demolished).



The path (Maple Way) takes us to a green area known as the Field of Hope; go anti-clockwise around it and onto Lansdowne Drive. Continue ahead on Canberra Crescent to Stanhome Square and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.



From Stanhome Square, and at intermittent points along this walk, there are long views across the City...

...to QMC



..and Nottingham University



...and the city centre.



Go around the Square and down Queensbury Avenue, with its impressive trees, and turn left up to the top of Greythorn Drive.

Ahead there are some fine trees in the cemetery



Turn right into Walcote Drive, passing 'The Grand' Care Home.



This was the site of the South Notts Hussars, a Shipstones pub which closed in 2004 and demolished in 2007.

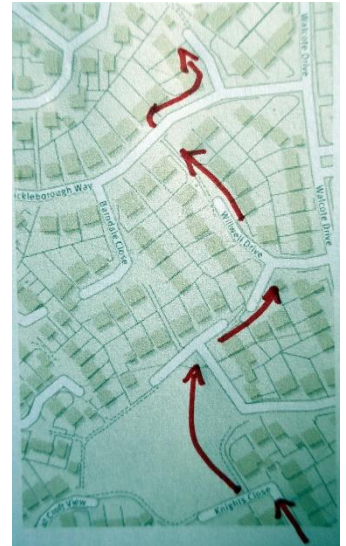
Named in memory of the men of the local territorial army unit, which fought in a number of formations during the Second Boer War and the First and Second World Wars. In May 1942, the 107th (South Nottinghamshire Hussars Yeomanry) Field Regiment of the Royal Artillery was wiped out at the 'Battle of Knightsbridge', fighting a brave defensive rear-guard action to the last round to cover the retreat of the British Army during the Gazala campaign in North Africa.



Continue along Walcote Drive and then left into Knights Close.
 Bear right when the road divides and go across the green area at the end.



At the right hand corner, go along the twitchel to Willwell Drive, turn left and through another twitchel to Mickleborough Way. Turn right and then left along Glebe Farm Close and another twitchel



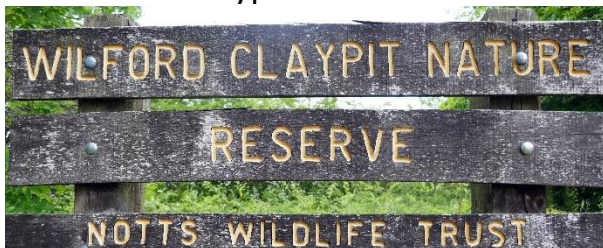
The name, Glebe Farm Close, reminds us that this whole area used to be farmland. Glebe Farm was at what is now the junction of Greythorn Drive and Rugby Road as seen in this photo from 1910. More recently it has been the site of J Swingler Transport.



The twitchel at the end of Glebe Farm Close takes us to another green, open area.



We pass this on our right and continue along the path to Compton Acres road. Turn left, up the hill, almost as far as the Apple Tree pub. We now go through the gate into the Wilford Claypit Nature Reserve



The Wilford Claypit was the source of clay to make bricks. It was owned by the Wilford Brick Co. and the brickworks were situated next to the claypit on land that is now part of the Nottingham South & Wilford Industrial Estate. The works opened in 1895 and closed in 1967, due to clay stocks getting low and uneconomical to extract.

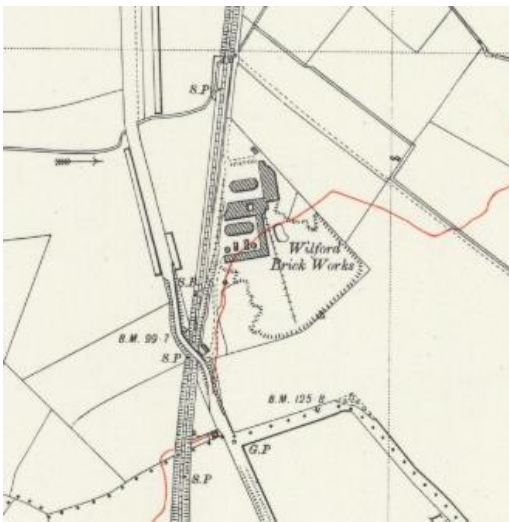


1913

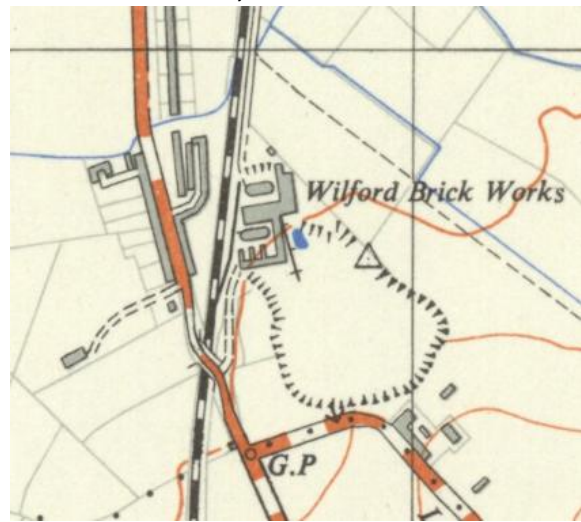
This, rather unclear, 1913 map shows that most of the area we have been walking through was fields, with West Bridgford occupying a relatively small area at the top right.

Glebe Farm is marked with a red dot and the brickworks and clay pit are marked with the black triangle – alongside is the Great Central Railway.

The two expanded maps below show the site in 1913 and then, with the clay pit doubled in size, in 1952.



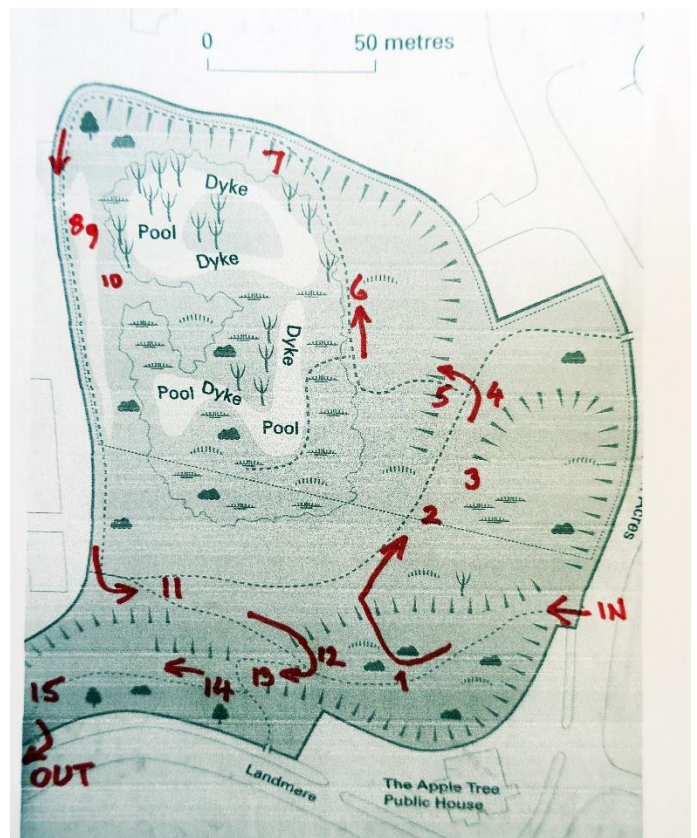
1913



1952

The many years of clay extraction for making bricks has left an unusual landscape of pools, ditches and banks. Now a nature reserve, managed by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, the areas of open water, marshland, streams, grassland and wet woodland support many different plants, birds and other animals. The wetlands are filled with water from natural springs. The purity of the water and the wide variety of plants and other wildlife which thrive here has resulted in the marsh area being designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

As we enter the reserve, we have been transported to the countryside...



Map shows photo locations



1



2



3



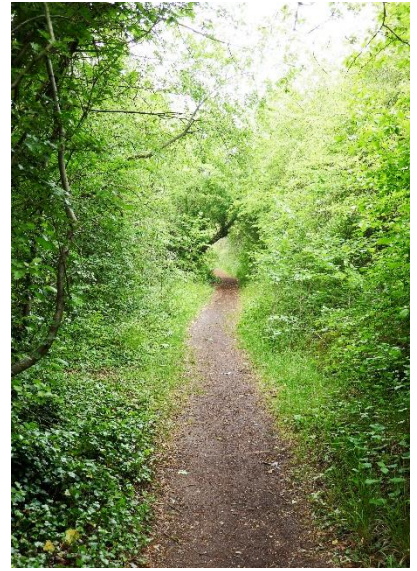
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5



6



7



8



9



Southern
Marsh
Orchid

10



11



12



13



14



15

We leave the claypit over a stile onto Landmere Lane. Go right, down to Wilford Road-Ruddington Lane, right again and cross the entrance to the Nottingham South & Wilford Industrial Estate to the tram line.

The tram follows the alignment of the Great Central Railway. The railway was in a cutting and Ruddington Lane was at a higher level than it is now, crossing over a bridge. When the tram was built the rail alignment was raised and Ruddington Lane, between its junction with Fieldway and the entrance to Nottingham South and Wilford Industrial Estate, was lowered, thus allowing trams to cross Ruddington Lane at street level.



This photograph taken in 1964 shows a steam train passing the Wilford Brickworks. The view was presumably taken from the Ruddington Lane bridge





The view today is somewhat different: taken from a lower level in the absence of the bridge, the industrial estate buildings, just visible on the right, replacing the brickworks, the new tracks raised and a tram replacing the steam train.

The walk goes alongside the tram line to the next tramstop (Compton Acres) and then, go right, to the pond beside Lyme Park, where there is still plenty of bird activity



And the gosling family have gone fromaah!



...to confident adolescence...



...and now, late teens? ...with adult plumage starting to show



Leaving the pond, turn right on Compton Acres road and left at the roundabout onto Rugby Road. Then take the path to the right and follow it to Walcote Drive



Go left and follow the road to its junction with Greythorn Drive. Immediately opposite is the latest development in the Wilford Hill estate – this one on the site of what was South Nottingham College. Summer Drive leads to Spring Close and Autumn Close – just as well there was only room for 3 streets – who would want to live on Winter Close?



Finally, return to Musters Road via Stowe Avenue, Uppingham Crescent, Rugby Road and Eton Road.