

Topic Page: [Nottingham \(England\)](#)

Summary Article: **Nottingham**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

City and administrative centre of Nottingham City unitary authority in central England, on the River Trent, 38 km/24 mi north of Leicester; population (2001) 249,600. The city's prosperity was based on the expansion of the lace and hosiery industries in the 18th century. The pharmacy chain Boots was started here in 1892, and the economy has diversified into industries including tourism and engineering.

History There is evidence of human settlement in Nottingham dating back thousands of years. Excavations at Creswell Crags, a group of limestone caves at nearby Worksop, revealed evidence of continuous human occupation in 40,000–28,000 BC. From the 6th century Nottingham was a Saxon settlement known as Snotengaham. By the 9th century it was held by the Danes during their occupation of the Midlands. In 1086 the Normans assumed control: they dropped the 's' from Snotengaham, and preserved Sherwood Forest to provide hunting for Norman kings. Richard III had his headquarters at Nottingham Castle before his defeat at the Battle of Bosworth. Charles I raised his standard here at the beginning of the English Civil War before the town was taken by the Parliamentarians in 1643. In 1589 William Lee invented the first stocking frame in Nottingham, and by the late 18th century hose production employed thousands of framework knitters. Inventor Richard Arkwright introduced his first spinning frames here, and inventor James Hargreaves set up his 'spinning jenny' in a local cotton mill. Luddite riots, in response to poor working conditions and the introduction of machinery, took place in Nottingham in 1811–12 and 1816–17.

Features Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem Inn (c. 1189), situated below the castle, claims to be England's oldest inn. Nottingham has a famous racecourse, and cricket test matches are played at Trent Bridge, home of Nottingham County Cricket Club. The city is home to the oldest football league club, Notts County (1862). Nottingham has two universities: the University of Nottingham (1881) and Nottingham Trent University (1992; formerly Trent Polytechnic). The National Water Sports Centre (1964) is to the east of the city, near to Holme Pierrepont Hall (1500), a Tudor mansion. There is also an old Lace Market with 19th-century warehouses, the Lace Hall Museum, and the Costume Museum, as well as the restored Green's Mill, where mathematician George Green was once a miller. Novelist D H Lawrence lived in the city borough of Eastwood, and 13th-century Newstead Abbey, in the north of the city, was home to the poet Lord Byron. Parks include Wollaton Park (300 ha/741 acres), which contains the Elizabethan mansion, Wollaton Hall (1580), now a natural-history museum, and to the north of the city lies Sherwood Forest, home of the legendary outlaw Robin Hood. The Nottingham Goose Fair, which dates from the Middle Ages, is the oldest and largest travelling fair in the country, and returns to Nottingham every October. Cultural institutions include Nottingham Playhouse (1963), Theatre Royal (1866), and the Royal Concert Hall (1982).

The Roman Catholic cathedral of St Barnabas was designed by English architect Augustus Pugin. St Peter's Church has architecture dating from the 12th and 15th centuries. The Church of St Mary also dates from the 15th century, and the Church of St Nicholas was built in 1678.

In the nearby villages of Babworth and Scrooby the group of 17th-century non-conformist religious thinkers who became known as the Pilgrim Fathers first gathered and formulated their ideas.

Nottingham Castle The heavily restored 13th-century gatehouse is all that remains of the original castle. It was built on Castle Rock, 40 m/130 ft above the city, just after the Norman Conquest. Intended to protect a major route to the north of England, it ultimately became a royal palace and fortress. After the English Civil War it was dismantled (1651) and a mansion was built on its site (1674–78). The mansion was burned down during the riots in 1831, but was restored and opened as a museum in 1878, becoming England's first provincial museum and art gallery. The collections include examples of Nottingham alabaster carving, and local industry of the 14th and 15th centuries. Under the castle and other parts of the town is an extensive network of tunnels and caves, some of which can be visited, which have evidence of human habitation since the 13th century.

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