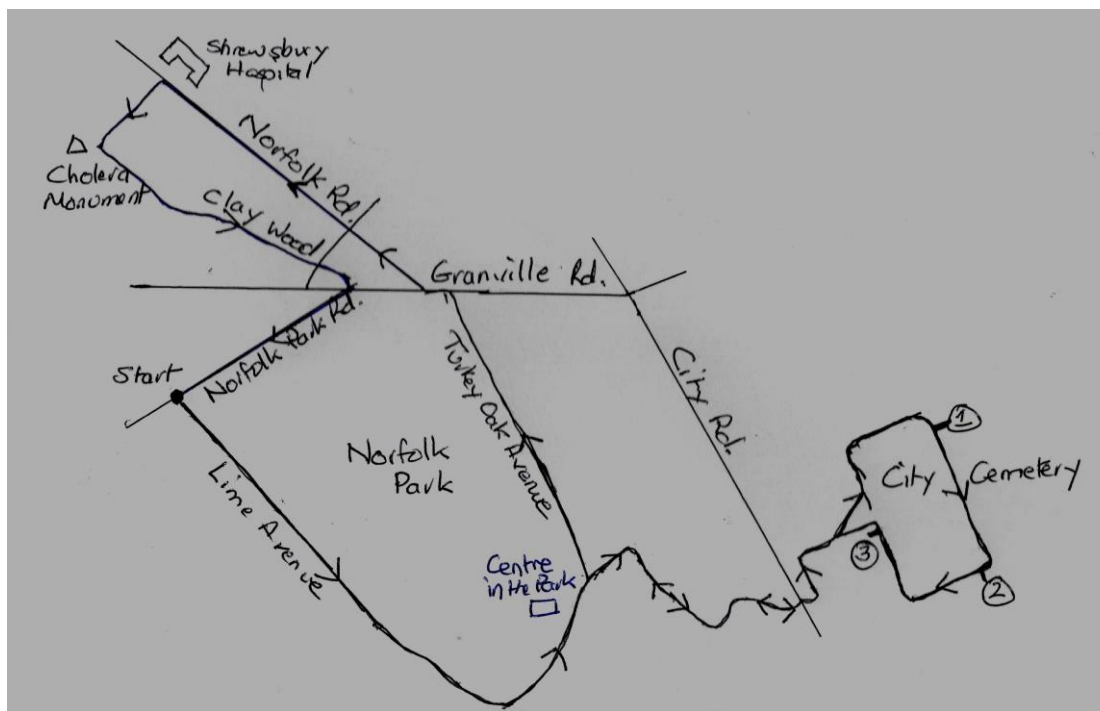


A walk through Norfolk Heritage Park and its environs

This article is the third in a series describing circular walks to follow during a pandemic when the Government advice is to exercise locally. The route of about 3.5 miles goes through three areas of historical interest: Norfolk Heritage Park, City Road Cemetery and the Cholera Monument Grounds (there is overlap with the Norfolk Heritage Trail).



The walk starts at the entrance to Norfolk Heritage Park on Norfolk Park Road behind Sheffield College, a ten-minute drive from Nether Edge. There should be enough car parking near the entrance, in the laybys on the one way section of Norfolk Park Road off Park Grange Road. City Road Cemetery is open daily from 9.00am and 10.00am on Sundays.

Norfolk Heritage Park

Norfolk Heritage Park opened to the public in 1848 and was a gift from the Duke of Norfolk who owned the land. During the medieval period, the land formed part of Sheffield Park, the deer park of Sheffield Manor.

It was the first public park in Sheffield and is one of the oldest in the country. In 1909 it was taken over by Sheffield Council. The park retains many of its original features including the circular carriage ride, the expanses of grass and the avenues of lime and turkey oak.



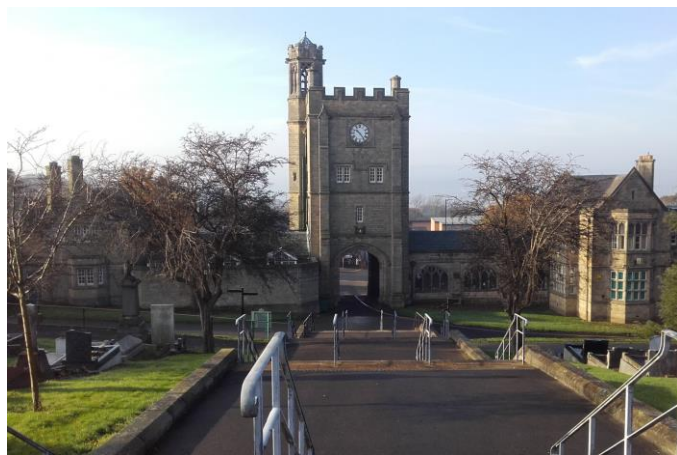
Norfolk Park Road Entrance

From the entrance walk along the Lime Avenue (*planted in the 1840's as part of the original design of the park*) for about 800 metres avoiding turnings on the left and right. Then keeping on the main avenue, curve round to the left passing an archway (*built in 1912 as the entrance to a refreshment pavilion*) and the Centre in the Park, both on the left. After passing between two playgrounds, leave the park using a footpath on the right, up some steps to St Aiden's Avenue.

At the top of the steps cross over the road (St Aiden's Avenue) and turn left walking up the hill to the main road (St Aidan's Road), cross over the main road and walk up the hill until you have passed St Aiden's Drive which is the first left. You will see the clock tower of the cemetery between the houses on the left. Walk up the next set of steps on the left onto a path between the houses. The pavement curves round to the right and you will see a clear road sign "FOOTPATH TO CITY ROAD". Take this footpath and turn right at the top to cross at the lights and then through the pedestrian entrance to the cemetery, by the bus stop.

City Road Cemetery

City Road Cemetery is designated as grade II and was opened in 1881. It is a good example of a late Victorian public cemetery for an expanding industrial city.



Main entrance and clock tower

On entering the pedestrian entrance, turn left and walk to a board by the main entrance and clock tower where there is a map of the cemetery. The suggested route in the sketch visits three war memorials:

- 1) the Belgian war memorial next to a derelict chapel (in plot HH)
- 2) the Sheffield Blitz garden and
- 3) the 1st World War memorial (plot M).

When Belgium was invaded by Germany in August 1914 about 250 000 refugees fled and many thousands came to the UK. Sheffield accommodated about 3000 Belgians. Both Shirle Hill and the Ecclesall Bierlow union provided temporary accommodation for Belgian refugees and injured soldiers. The memorial commemorates 44 Belgian men and women who died in Sheffield during the war.

The Sheffield Blitz garden is a communal grave for 134 victims of the Sheffield Blitz on the 12th and 15th December 1940. Many of the victims were killed in a direct hit whilst sheltering in the cellar of the Marples Hotel on December 12th, the worst single incident for loss of life in Sheffield during the whole war.

City Road Cemetery War Memorials



Belgian War Memorial (1)



World War I Memorial (3)



Sheffield Blitz Garden (2)

After visiting the three memorials, make your way back to the pedestrian entrance and retrace your way back to Norfolk Park. Fork right on the steps to meet the main avenue and walk straight along the Turkey Oak Avenue (*The turkey oak is native to South Eastern Europe and Asia and was introduced in the UK as an ornamental tree in the 18th century. The avenue is the longest double planted turkey oak avenue in Europe*).

If you wish to shorten the walk by missing out the Clay Wood and Cholera Monument section, take the first left along the wide path which will take you back to the Lime Avenue and the Norfolk Road entrance. To do the full walk stay on the main avenue to reach the entrance on Granville Road. Cross over Granville Road and walk along Norfolk Road for 500 metres until you reach the entrance to the Cholera Monument Grounds on your left.

Shrewsbury Hospital, the Cholera Monument Grounds and Clay Wood

Opposite the entrance are the Shrewsbury Hospital almshouses. When Gilbert Talbot, the 7th Earl of Shrewsbury and a step son of Bess of Hardwick died in 1616, he left instructions for the establishment of a hostel for 20 of Sheffield's poorest which was built near Park Square. In 1827 it was moved to its' current site and is still used as almshouses.



In the early 1830s the second cholera epidemic (1826 to 1837) reached the UK killing over 50 000 people in London alone. The disease reached Sheffield in 1832 claiming over 400 victims of whom 339 are buried in the Cholera Monument grounds including the Master Cutler, John Blake whose gravestone is close to the monument. The land was given by the Duke of Norfolk so that victims could be buried quickly to help reduce the spread of the disease.

From the Cholera Monument turn left to take the main path back to City Road through Clay Wood , an ancient woodland, and cross over Granville Road, making your way along Norfolk Park Road back to the start.