



# SHEFFIELD PUB HERITAGE WALK

3

NEEPSSEND



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3

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Water Tower,  
Stones Cannon Brewery

# Introduction

This booklet describes a short walking tour in the Neepsend area of Sheffield., highlighting both its industrial and social, heritage, as well as the 'Beer Capital' status earned by the city. Sheffield has more breweries per head than any other city in the UK. In addition to those mentioned on the route, nearby breweries include: Blue Bee, Little Critters, and Stancill. Sheffield also boasts many excellent pubs.

The name Neepsend is believed to originate from Old Norse: nypr, meaning a peak. The area lies in the Don Valley, at the 'end' of a high ridge descending from Shirecliffe. Other recorded names include Nipisend and Nypysend.


This walk was originally developed as part of the annual **Heritage Open Days**.


This booklet is the third in a developing series:

- 1 **University/West Street/Fagan's** (2023)
- 2 **Little Chicago** (2024)
- 3 **Neepsend** (2025)
- 4 **Kelham Island** (2026)
- 5 **Riverside** (2027)



Throughout the series, the pubs mentioned fall into six heritage categories:

 Outstanding national historic importance

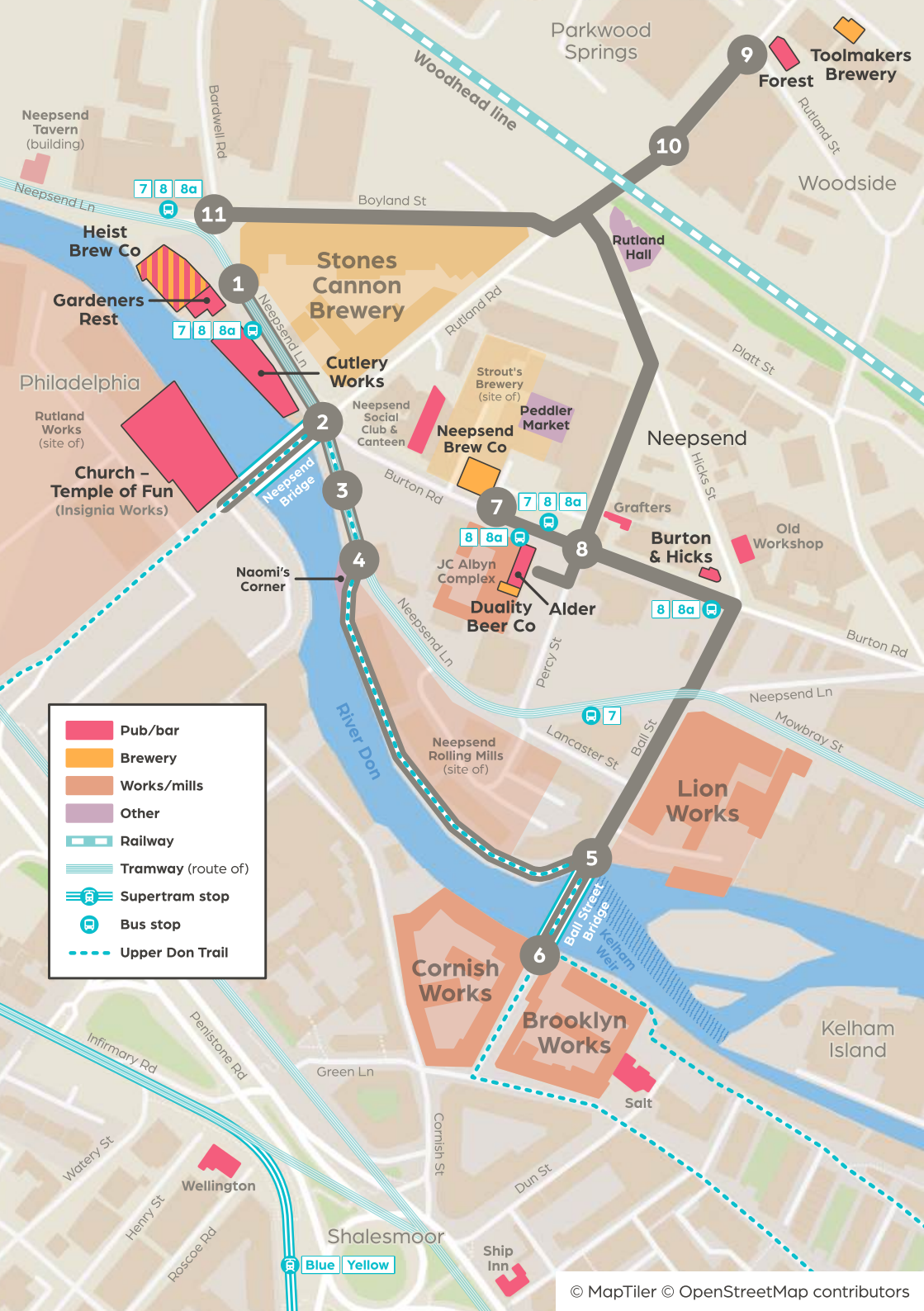
 Very special national historic interest

 Special national historic interest

 Local historic interest (interior)

 Local historic interest (exterior)

 OCR (Outstanding Conversions and Restorations)



- Pub/bar
- Brewery
- Works/mills
- Other
- Railway
- Tramway (route of)
- Supertram stop
- Bus stop
- Upper Don Trail

# Walking Directions

This circular walk of approximately one mile starts and finishes at the **Gardeners Rest (Neepsend Lane)**.

- 1 Leaving the **Gardeners Rest**, turn right, passing the **Cutlery Works**.
- 2 Cross Rutland Road. **Neepsend Bridge** is to your right. To the right of the bridge, on the far side of the River Don, is the **Insignia Works**, now **Church – Temple of Fun**.



- 3 Follow Neepsend Lane, adjacent to the river, passing the former gents' toilet on your right.
- 4 Turn right into **Naomi's Corner**, then follow a short section of the **Upper Don Trail** towards the city centre, keeping the river on your right. After 200 m, you reach Ball Street.
- 5 Turn right onto **Ball Street Bridge**. At the far end of the bridge, on your left are the **Alfred Beckett Brooklyn Works**, with the **Cornish Works** opposite. On the other side of the river, towards Kelham Island, are the

former works of John Bedford & Sons Ltd, part of the **Lion Works**.

- 6 Retrace your steps across Ball Street Bridge, passing the Lion Works on your right. Turn left onto Burton Road, approaching the **JC Albyn Complex, Duality Brew Co**, and **Alder** on your left. You may wish to visit the latter.
- 7 **Neepsend Brew Co** is to your right, on the far side of Burton Road.
- 8 Cross Burton Road and continue, turning right along Percy Street. Turn left onto Hicks Street, passing **Rutland Hall** on your right. Turn right onto Rutland Road (B6070). The railway, above, was once the main train line between Manchester and Sheffield.
- 9 On your right, you will reach the **Forest**, the tap for **Toolmakers Brewery**.
- 10 Retrace your steps onto Rutland Road, heading downhill. After the railway bridge, carefully cross the main road and turn right onto Boyland Street. On your left are the derelict remnants of **Stones Cannon Brewery**.
- 11 At the next junction, on the opposite side of the road, are the Cutlery Works, the Gardeners Rest, and **Heist Brew Co** – each of which you may wish to visit. Diagonally opposite Heist is the former **Neepsend Tavern**.



## ■ Gardeners Rest

105 Neepsend Lane, S3 8AT  
 Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area  
[camra.org.uk/pubs/147699](http://camra.org.uk/pubs/147699)

### ● Local historic interest (interior)

A lobby area leads into this traditional two-room pub. To the right is the main bar. To the rear is a conservatory leading to an eclectic beer garden which overlooks the River Don.



The name probably derives from Neepsend's origins as the market garden

for Sheffield. The pub sign pays homage to this heritage: a stylised planting line, as used in allotments.



The internal lobby doors are labelled 'LOUNGE' and 'PUBLIC BAR', names identical to those shown on a 1981 plan (John Smith's Tadcaster Brewery Ltd, Oakwell Brewery, Barnsley). This signage is over 40 years old.



On the left is the dram shop, a small room with bench seating around two walls and a restored 1920s bar billiard table. This game is thought to have been introduced to Britain from Belgium in the 1930s. The bench seating is possibly pre-war.

Note the words 'dram shop' on the bottom left window. In the UK, this name for a pub room is rarely seen. The only other Sheffield example, the Ship (Shalesmoor, S3 8UL), has some unique external tiling which spells out the two words.



The Gardeners was rebuilt in 1899-1900, opening on 21 December. The plans (Holmes & Watson Architects, Sheffield for JL Cockayne & Son, Owlerton Brewery) were slightly more ambitious than reality. However, they show a central hall, a bar (with servery) on the left, and both a smoke room (front) and a dining room (rear) on the right. To the rear left is a kitchen. The current upstairs function room was originally a fully equipped snooker room. This room also includes a hatch in the door – members of various organisations would show their credentials before being admitted. Toilets were located in the rear yard.

Cockaynes merged with Samuel Allsopp (Savile Street, Sheffield) in 1899. The brewery closed when John Smith's acquired Cockaynes in 1913.

In 1974, the outside toilets were demolished, and internal toilets were installed in place of the kitchen (Shepherd Fowler

In the US, a dram shop rule (or dram shop act) is a civil statute that makes a commercial establishment selling alcoholic drinks (for example, a bar or restaurant) liable for the harmful acts of its intoxicated customers – but only when the establishment acts negligently in serving the customer, and the customer then causes harm as a result of their intoxication. Examples include drink-driving accidents and bar fights.

and Marshall for John Smith's Tadcaster Brewery Co. Ltd.). By this time, the bar had been extended into its current position, with the two rooms on the right merged into a single tap room, leaving a small lounge at front left.



For many years, the Gardeners was a John Smith's pub before being taken on by Mansfield Brewery in the 1990s. From 1999, it was under the ownership of Eddie Munnely and Pat Wilson. Plans for the conservatory subsequently appeared (Tatlow Stancer Architects). These changes also included the creation of the current toilet block, with the rear-left room reverting to its original use as a kitchen.



In January 2007, the pub became the tap for the nearby Sheffield Brewery Co. Later that year, the Gardeners was nearly lost in the June floods, with water flooding both the cellar and beer garden, and reaching a level above the ground-floor radiators.<sup>1</sup>

It re-opened almost two and a half years later having featured in both the 2008 and 2009 national *CAMRA Good Beer Guides* – the only pub to appear in two consecutive editions while closed. The pub cellar was again flooded in November 2019. On that occasion, it reopened the following day.



In 2016, Pat and Eddy announced their retirement. The Gardeners Rest Community Society took over running the pub, and the following year bought it outright, having raised funds through a combination of a community share issue and finance from the Plunkett Foundation and Key Fund. The pub became the first community-owned pub in Sheffield and is now a community asset owned by the Gardeners Rest Community Society Ltd.

It was CAMRA Sheffield & District Pub of the Year in both 2000 and 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> 2007 images: (1) Tony Canning, (2) Gardeners Rest Community Society Ltd

## ■ Cutlery Works

73–101 Neepsend Lane, S3 8A  
Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area  
[camra.org.uk/pubs/148091](http://camra.org.uk/pubs/148091)

Originally built c1920, the Rutland Cutlery Works reopened in November 2018 as a two-storey, 1,300 m<sup>2</sup> food hall. At the time, it was the largest food hall in the north of England.

It has since proved successful, winning Best Food Hall at the British Street Food Awards in both 2022 and 2023. It was also a runner-up in 2024.



The external wall features a mural painted by Katy Sett in 2020. This commemorates a meeting between the formerly enslaved Frederick Douglass (1818–95) and Mary Ann Rawson (1801–87), leader of the Sheffield Anti-Slavery Society, at Wincobank, Sheffield, in September 1846.

Born Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey, Douglass escaped from slavery in Maryland in 1838. He later became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York.

## ■ Neepsend Bridge

Rutland Road, S3 8DP  
Grade II listed December 1995  
Kelham Island Conservation Area

This road bridge was built in 1854, with the parapet rebuilt following the 1864 flood. It has three elliptical arches with rounded ends, a parapet wall with moulded top and four corner piers with moulded caps.



Next to the bridge, on Burton Road, is a long-disused Victorian gents' toilet which protrudes over the Don.



Beyond the toilet are The Maltings – more remnants of the Stones empire. Except for the fabled paintwork: ‘CANNON BREWERY,’ and ‘STONES LTD.,’ little sign remains of brewery use. The building is currently the offices of HRS Services Ltd.



Burton Road includes street art by Pete McKee: Frank enjoying the king of biscuits – Hobnobs.



Hobnobs were launched in 1985, with the chocolate variety following two years later. The latter is currently produced in Harlesden (north-west London), while the original variety is manufactured at the Tollcross factory (Glasgow).



## ■ Insignia Works (Church – Temple of Fun)

4a Rutland Way, S3 8DG  
Grade II Listed August 2009  
[camra.org.uk/pubs/148070](http://camra.org.uk/pubs/148070)

The Rutland Works, on this site, were bought and later expanded by Samuel Osborn & Company from 1885 onwards. In 1851, Samuel Osborn (1826–91) had set up on Broad Lane as a file manufacturer. His business expanded, and the Clyde Works quickly became too small.



In 1862, he bought the ‘Hand & Heart’ trademark, which in 1833 had been granted to Thomas Ward, a pen and pocket-knife manufacturer. In 1867, his brother-in-law, William Fawcett, joined him, and new premises – the Clyde Steel & Iron Works, situated on the Wicker – became their main base.

After the acquisition of the Rutland Works and the death of Samuel, Fawcett

Osborn, Samuel Osborn Jr., and Frederick Marmaduke Osborn continued to develop the business. At their peak, the Osborns virtually monopolised the world's manufacture of tool steel.

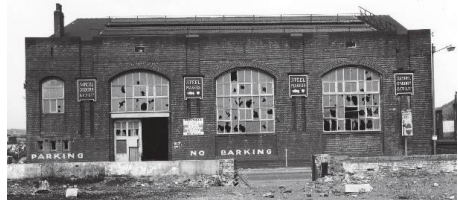
After the Second World War, the company became known as Osborn Steels. In 1980 they merged with Edgar Allen Balfour Steel Ltd and were acquired by Aurora Steels Ltd.

In 1919, the company asked the famed Victorian architect William John Hale (1862–1929) to design a new railway spring shop at the Rutland Works.

This is the only known industrial building designed by Hale, who was responsible for several iconic buildings across the city. These include Stephen Hill Wesleyan Chapel and Bole Hill School (both 1896), Hammerton Street School (1904), and Banner Cross Methodist Church (1929).

Internally a utilitarian workshop, opened in 1920, the extravagant Insignia Works has large segmental-headed windows,

subtle architectural detailing, and relief panels advertising the name and trade-marks of the firm.



By the 1980s, the building was derelict, as illustrated by this 1984 image.<sup>2</sup>

In 2018, it was reborn as Church – Temple of Fun – a 100% vegan bar, eatery, games arcade and clothes shop.



<sup>2</sup> Picture Sheffield s27799



## ■ Naomi's Corner

Neepsend Lane, S3 8BZ

Opened in August 2021, Naomi's Corner is a community garden – a reflective space close to a major road junction. It was created in memory of Naomi Colcomb, who died in 2018, to honour her passion for connecting with others, nature and oneself in a peaceful space.



It is also part of the site of the C19<sup>th</sup> Neepsend Rolling Mills. The garden includes the remains of a crucible furnace – one of fewer than 20 survivors from the more than 2,000 that were once spread across the city.



Neepsend Lane was part of the Sheffield Tramway electric tram route, which ran from Owlerton to the city centre. This route was established between 1902 and 1905, when the lines were electrified by Sheffield Corporation. The last tram ran in 1960.



## ■ Upper Don Trail

[upperdontrail.org.uk](http://upperdontrail.org.uk)

This path is part of the Upper Don Trail – a recreational-use trail that heads north from Sheffield. The Upper Don Trail Trust charity, formed in 2004, is committed to creating a route that is used by all: cyclists, prams, walkers, and wheelchair users. The trail links with the Trans Pennine Trail at Oughtibridge and the Five Weirs Walk at Lady's Bridge.

## ■ Great Sheffield Flood: 11 March 1864

The dam wall of Dale Dyke (Bradfield) broke as the reservoir was being filled for the first time. Six hundred and fifty million gallons rushed down the Loxley Valley before joining the River Don at Hillsborough and continuing through the Upper Don Valley towards the city centre. The immediate cause was a crack in the embankment.

At least 240 people died. More than 600 houses were damaged or destroyed. In addition, many grinding workshops were

badly affected, with several losing their grindstones as they were swept away.

Compensation claims were made by both individuals and companies against the Sheffield Water Company for loss of property or livelihood, and for injury and/or the death of relatives.

The flood led to reforms in engineering practice, setting specific standards that needed to be met when building large-scale structures. It also introduced the concept of corporate culpability.

The dam was rebuilt the following year.



## ■ Ball Street Bridge and Kelham Weir

Ball Street, S3 8SH

Grade II listed, November 1985

Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area

Originally constructed c1856 using cast iron, the Ball Street Bridge was destroyed in the 1864 Sheffield flood:

*"The Ball Street foot bridge..... was destroyed. Although it was constructed of iron, it was torn down by the force of the water, and bent about as though it were only a piece of pasteboard. A large portion of it might be seen long afterwards lying in the river in a sloping position, and not entirely disconnected from its original position at one end."*

(Harrison,S (1864): 56)

The bridge was rebuilt by the Milton Iron Works (Elsecar), then widened in 1900. It has three cast iron arches carried on ashlar piers – the inspiration for the logo of the nearby Neepsend Brew Co. It was closed to traffic in 2020.

In 1865, at a time of fear regarding cholera outbreaks, 28 decomposing dogs were found in one mass at the bridge.

Looking south, you can see the northern tip of Kelham Island. The river runs off to the left, while the water diverted by the weir flows into the mouth of the goit. At

130 metres, Kelham Weir is the widest in Sheffield.

Three exchange boxes on Ball Street have been painted by members of the Kelham Island Arts Collective to celebrate the industrial past of the area:

- **John Wilkinson:** Lizzie the elephant, who once moved steel around Sheffield.
- **Simon Wigglesworth-Baker:** an abstract representation of Kelham Island.
- **James Croft:** a flooded River Don, with trees submerged by flood water.



## ■ Alfred Beckett Brooklyn Works

Green Lane, S3 8SH

Grade II listed, November 1985

Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area

Constructed in the mid-C19th, the Brooklyn Works originally produced steel, saws and files. The building was damaged in the 1864 flood.





Alfred Beckett submitted a compensation claim of £123 11s 2d, with local journalist Samuel Harrison writing at the time:

*“The works of Messrs Beckett and Slater, steel, saw, and file manufacturers, were injured to a serious extent. The boundary wall was carried away, and a large steam engine boiler was torn from its bed and washed down some hundreds of yards into the works of Messrs Wheatman and Smith. A quantity of machinery was broken to pieces, furnaces were extinguished, and various finished goods were spoiled.”*  
(Harrison, S. (1864), p76)

Alfred Beckett & Sons Ltd continued manufacturing until the mid-1960s under the ‘Matchless’ trademark, making sev-

eral structural additions to the works. In 1967, Sheffield-based Tempered Spring Company Ltd. bought the company.

The building later stood empty, listing saving it from demolition. In the 1990s, AXIS Architecture (Sheffield) converted the disused works into residential apartments and offices for small businesses.

The similarly named Brooklyn Bridge in New York opened in May 1883.

## ■ Cornish Works

**Ball Street, S6 3AF**

Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area

Built from 1828, James Dixon’s Cornish Plate Works, on the corner of Ball Street and Green Lane, was the first of the large-scale factories erected for the manufacture of metal wares: files and cutting tools. By the 1860s, the site had expanded to four acres, employed over 700 people, and was the world’s leading producer of shoemaking tools.

Manufacturing ceased in 2003; some parts of the complex were demolished, while others have become apartments.





## ■ Lion Works

40 Ball St, S3 8DB

Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area

The Lion Works was built by John Bedford and John Bramall in the 1860s. In 1871, the company name became John Bedford & Sons; they manufactured crucible cast steel, edge tools, engineers' and blacksmiths' tools, files, forks, knives, saws, shovels and spades.

Later, in the 1900s, they manufactured special hollow mining drills, through which water was forced to reduce dust. These were extensively used in South African gold mines. By 1968, the company made

a quarter of all the files used in Britain. After a series of acquisitions, it closed in 1984.

## ■ Burton & Hicks

50 Burton Road, S3 8BX

Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area

A planning application was granted in late January 2025 to transform this C19<sup>th</sup> building into a micropub. The site, which used to house the cells for the adjoining police station, is situated on the corner of Burton Road and Hicks Street. It was recently used as an electricity substation. Renovations will include a rear extension and the installation of new windows. The proposed name is Burton & Hicks.

A Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the planning application states: *"The extension will be modest and will not detract from the appearance of the original building, which will be cleaned and repaired, respecting the conservation area status."*





## ■ Duality Brew Co

Unit 114, J C Albyn Complex, Percy Street, S3 8BT  
[dualitybrew.co](http://dualitybrew.co)

As a direct result of winning the Elusive Brewing seventh birthday home-brew competition in March 2024, Duality (Brendan Hampsey and Ben Pearson) went commercial. They relocated from Todwick in October 2024 and are now producing their hop-heavy beers in Neepsend.

## ■ Alder

JC Albyn Complex, Burton Road, S3 8BZ  
Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area  
[camra.org.uk/pubs/148045](http://camra.org.uk/pubs/148045)

### ● Local historic interest (interior)

Both Duality and Alder are located in an 1875 factory, the Albyn Works (architect, TE Watson). It was here that Joseph Pickering and Sons Ltd manufactured Blanco, a compound which, when mixed with water, was used by soldiers to clean, colour and polish their equipment. In the 1950s, the company introduced a tinned paste that could be applied directly. Blanco came in a variety of colours including blue, buff, green, tan, and white. They closed in the 1980s.

The current complex was available from the 1990s. From 2006 it included the home of Sheffield Brewing Company. In November 2016, they were the first Sheffield brewery to utilise a mobile bottling plant: Lord of the Isles, visiting from Scotland.





The wooden bar was originally built at the University of Sheffield, Ranmoor House Hall of Residence (S10 3AY). This opened in 1968 and was demolished forty years later, the servery moving to create the focal point of the, then, brewery taproom.



Outside, the brickwork features many former local refractory companies. For example, 'SPB Co Ltd' refers to the Sheffield Patent Brick Company, who were active from 1872.

In November 2021, the brewery ceased production, the space transforming into Alder. The brewing equipment, a traditional, gravity-fed tower brewing system, is still in place and can be seen from the bar area. The innovative rotating mash tun is worth a special note.

The name, Alder, is from the tree. The alder grows both male and female catkins synonymous with the all-inclusive environment of the bar. The tree also supports the environment by fixing nitrogen into the soil. This synergises with the aim of the bar to be both allinclusive and a helpful member of the community.





## ■ Neepsend Brew Co

Unit 13, 92 Burton Road, S3 8DA  
[neepsendbrewco.com](http://neepsendbrewco.com)

Neepsend commenced brewing in the Lion Works in June 2015 after James Birkett and head brewer Gavin Martin took on Little Ale Cart Brewery (LAC).



The 10 bbl plant supplies beers mostly locally, including to their brewery tap, the Wellington (S3 7EQ). LAC (2008–15) was located in the 'brick shed' adjacent to the Wellington and operated, initially as Port Mahon (2002–06).

Neepsend have one core cask beer (Blonde, ABV 4.0%) and an ever-changing range of hop-forward seasonal ales in both cask and keg. Brewery branding features the nearby



Ball Street Bridge. The brewery moved to nearby Burton Road in 2020, in the same complex originally occupied by Strout's Brewery Co Ltd.



This company started as Strouts and Harryman, with 1872 bringing Strout's and Waterman. 1889 saw formal registration as Strout's Brewery Co Ltd. The Travellers Rest (Oughtibridge) was briefly owned (1909–18); their front window engraved with the Strout's name is probably unique (see image). The company, with their 78 pubs, was taken over by local brewer Tennants in 1918.

From Strout's, Tennants also gained a new brewer, A Harriman. He was responsible for the design of the company coat of arms, as seen on leaded pub windows. This example is one of four at the King & Miller (Deepcar, Sheffield, S36 2RD).





## ■ Peddler Market

Peddler Warehouse, S3 8BX  
[peddler.market](http://peddler.market)

Since 2015, elsewhere in this complex, the monthly Peddler Market welcomes over 8000 visitors to a 700 m<sup>2</sup> ex-industrial warehouse. Available are music, street food, and a marketplace focussed on small local makers.

The beer offering includes tap takeovers. 2024 featured Deya, Full Circle, Kirkstall, Magic Rock, Marble, Neepsend, Neon Raptor, North Brewing, Redwillow, Seven Brothers and Vibrant Forest. The venue has also hosted indie craft beer festivals.



## ■ Rutland Hall

Hicks Street, S3 8BL

Rutland Hall was built by the Helen Wilson Settlement in 1906 as a community hub for young people. The Settlement, founded in 1896, promoted cultural, recreational and educational activities and placed strong emphasis on temperance. The building was funded by Dr Helen Wilson, the first female doctor and magistrate in Sheffield.

Between 1969 and 2010, it was used by South Yorkshire Printers Ltd.

Since 2017, it has been the home of In2Change, an organisation concerned with the rehabilitation of offenders and providing support to disadvantaged and vulnerable young people.

Helen Mary Wilson (1864–1951) was born in Mansfield, the daughter of Henry J Wilson (1833–1914), MP for Holmfirth, and Charlotte Cowan. Helen became house surgeon to the London Temperance Hospital in 1892 and then entered private practice in Sheffield, where she worked from 1893 to 1906.

In addition to her medical career, Helen carried on her father's campaigning work against the state regulation of prostitution and was honorary secretary and president of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene. Her other voluntary activities included serving as a JP and settlement and probation work. She was also president of the Sheffield Women's Suffrage Society, a branch of the North of England Suffrage Society.



## ■ Woodhead line

Built by the Sheffield, Ashton-Under-Lyne and Manchester Railway, the Woodhead railway line (Manchester Piccadilly/Sheffield Victoria) opened in 1845. Two years later, the company merged with the Great Grimsby and Sheffield Junction Railway, the Grimsby Docks Company, and the Sheffield and Lincolnshire Junction Railway, becoming the 'Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway' ('Mucky, Slow and Late').

In 1897, the company was renamed the Great Central Railway (GCR). In turn, in 1923, ownership passed to the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER).

In 1938, work started on electrifying the line. 1948 brought British Railways (from 1965, British Rail). In 1954, after the interruption because of World War Two, upgrade and electrification were completed.

Along the Upper Don Valley route from Sheffield to Penistone, there were originally five stations:

- Neepsend – opened 1 July 1888, closed 28 October 1940.

- Wadsley Bridge – closed to regular services in June 1959. Football excursions, serving Hillsborough (Sheffield Wednesday FC), continued to call until 8 January 1994; Nottingham Forest supporters formed the final footex.<sup>3</sup>
- Oughtibridge (bizarrely named Oughty Bridge) – closed 15 June 1959.
- Deepcar – closed 15 June 1959. Until September 2024, the Stocksbridge spur was occasionally used for freight. The line is currently mothballed.
- Wortley – closed 2 May 1955.

In 1970, passenger services between Sheffield Victoria and Manchester ceased. Since then, cross-Pennine services have used the longer and slower Hope Valley Route. Penistone is still open, hosting the Penistone Line between Barnsley and Huddersfield.

In 1981, following a reduction in freight traffic between the Yorkshire coalfields and power stations in the Northwest, the Woodhead line closed as a through route between Sheffield and Manchester. This resulted in full closure between Penistone and Hadfield, with a single line remaining in place between Penistone and Sheffield until 1986.

On 4 October 2023, the Conservative government announced that as a result of the curtailment of the HS2 line to Manchester, one of their 'indicative' infrastructure improvements would be the reopening of the train line from Sheffield to Stocksbridge for passenger trains. This is one of many promises that government has failed to keep.

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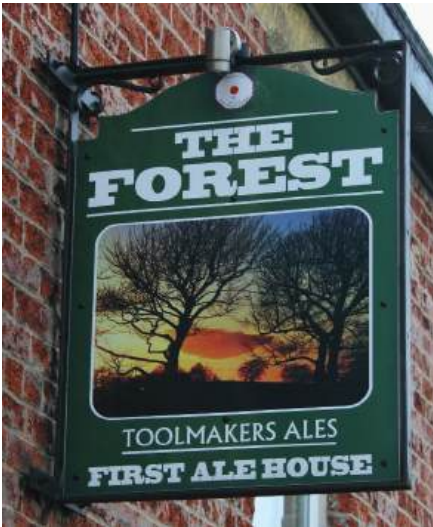
<sup>3</sup> Footex: a football excursion (special) train



## ■ Forest

Rutland Street, S3 9PA  
(also known as: Woodside)  
[camra.org.uk/pubs/147698](http://camra.org.uk/pubs/147698)

The Forest is the tap for Toolmakers Brewery which is literally just round the corner. Described in 1982 as an “old established street-corner pub with three rooms”<sup>4</sup>, the pub has since been opened out.

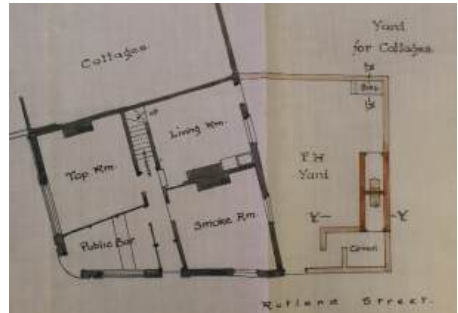


It is traditionally furnished with wooden strip flooring from the entrance and floral carpet in both the left area and the raised right



area. Taken on by William Stones in 1894, Marion and Ollie Ferns now own the pub.

Plans from 1910 (Messrs William Stones Ltd) show a small three-roomed pub: Public Bar on the front left with the Tap Room behind, a central corridor and Smoke Room on the right. The bar is in the Public Bar, with living quarters at the rear right. These plans also show the addition of a WC and urinals and the demolition of a cottage in the common yard to the right.



Seventy years later, 1981 plans (AA Design Ltd) show the Public Bar is now labelled Snug with the expanded bar also serving the rest of the pub. The Smoke Room has become a Lounge, and the rear left room is simply labelled Bar. The Snug continues to have its own entrance door, to the front left corner.

<sup>4</sup> CAMRA Sheffield & District (1982), *Real Beer in South Yorkshire*. GW Askew & Son, Sheffield, p67

The Forest was the last beer-only pub in South Yorkshire, becoming licensed to sell spirits in 1990. Plans from the same year

(David Smith Partnership) show the opening out of the pub into one larger area with the bar moving to a rear central position. There are also extensions at both sides of the building, a seating area to the left with both a kitchen and internal toilets to the right. The corner entrance is also lost, with the single central entrance remaining. This is the current layout.

Unusually, the pub sign is different on each side: the 'First Ale House' and 'Last Ale House' reference the brewery.

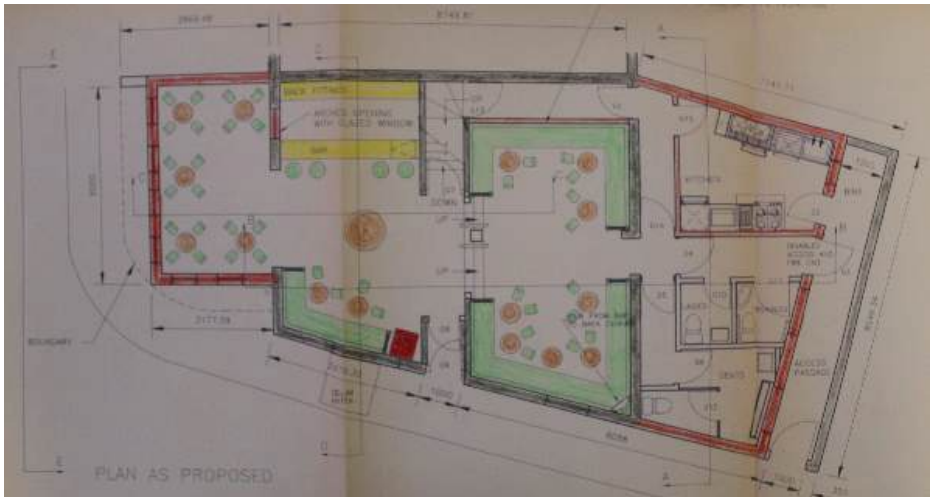
Opposite the pub, on Rutland Road, the Forest has sponsored an exchange box. Painted by Dave Akehurst in 2019, this shows a steelworker surrounded by beer and music.



## ■ Toolmakers Brewery

6-8 Botsford Street, S3 9PF

This brewery was established in 2012 in an old tool-making factory (ER Varney (Tools) Ltd). Toolmakers is a 2.5 bbl family-run brewery close to the Forest. The regular brews, whose names reflect the tool-making history, are supplemented by a varying range of different styles and strengths. These beers are rarely seen away from home.





## ■ Stones Cannon Brewery

43 Rutland Road, S3 8BE

William Stones Ltd was founded in 1868 by William Stones (1826–1894) and purchased by Bass Charrington in 1968.

The previous year, the nearby Hope and Anchor Brewery (S6 1NB) had also become part of the Bass empire. Complementing cask production at the Cannon Brewery, Hope concentrated on bottled beers (including a local favourite, Jubilee Stout). It closed in 1994.



Stones closed in 1999 when Bass acquired the brewery of their Burton-on-Trent neighbour, Ind Coope, and decided that the Cannon Brewery was surplus to requirements (older images from 1991, 1995).

At closure, very little of the original Victorian and Edwardian buildings remained:

the water tower (adjacent to Rutland Road) and some internal features. The site consisted of buildings of differing ages, character and size clustered round a large triangular internal courtyard.

William Stones was born in 1827, his mother owning a cabinet case maker business. Stones did not follow her and instead became a brewer. Initially, in the 1840s, this was a partnership with Joseph Watts at a small site on the corner of Acorn Street and Shalesmoor called Cannon Brewery. The name probably came from a nearby foundry that cast gun barrels.

William became sole owner in 1856 after buying out the Watts family's half of the business from his family. It is thought that Watts had died and bequeathed his share to his family.

In the 1860s Stones moved his brewery to a greenfield site situated on the corner of Neepsend Lane and Rutland Road, naming it Cannon Brewery. The location was previously agricultural land comprising several fields with boundaries in a north-east to south-west alignment.

By 1880, Stones had established maltings in Chesterfield, Retford and Worksop. These purchases were financed by profits from the brewery.



The distance from Hunter's Bar to All Saints, Ecclesall is about one mile (1.6 km).

William was interred in the family grave at All Saints. This has faces with bolts or bolt holes; one of these would originally have held a plate for William. Shortly afterwards, the company was registered as William Stones Ltd.



This success saw him die, on Tuesday 13 November 1894, as one of the richest men in Sheffield. The funeral took place the following Saturday at All Saints, Ecclesall (S11 7PP). According to the local press,<sup>5</sup> the funeral procession:

*“was of such magnitude that as the last carriage passed Hunter’s Bar the hearse has reached Ecclesall. On the road there was every manifestation of sympathy, and at the church the congregation more than filled the building... a remarkable tribute to the feeling with which the memory of the deceased and his many kind and generous deeds were remembered.”*

<sup>5</sup> *South Yorkshire Times* 24 November 1894

Stones Bitter was introduced by head brewer Edward “Ted” Collins in 1948. It was popular with Sheffield’s steelworkers and was originally available across South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Increasing demand saw the beer brewed at other Bass breweries from the 1970s onwards. Distribution was extended to the rest of northern England in 1977 and accompanied by a considerable marketing push nationwide from 1979.



The 1994–96 Sheffield Gold campaign was set in a steel foundry; it was filmed in the Czech Republic because Sheffield’s own foundries were considered to be too clean and automated for the desired gritty, industrial effect.



The beer’s popularity reached its peak in 1992 when it was the country’s highest-selling bitter, selling over a million barrels. The beer has been lauded as “one of Sheffield’s most famous exports.”

The alcoholic strength of Stones has varied: originally 4.1% abv, it was reduced to 3.9% in 1992. A further reduction to 3.7% took place in 1999. The cask-conditioned version was discontinued in 2012.

After the brewery closed, production of Stones continued elsewhere. A keg ver-

sion is currently brewed at John Smith’s (Tadcaster), while a canned version is produced at the Coors UK brewery in Burton-on-Trent.

Since September 2020, Stones Bitter (ABV 4.1%), developed from the original recipe, has been brewed locally at True North Brew Co (S3 7SB). The 2024 Sheffield Steel City Beer & Cider Festival (SCBF48) saw Stones – Sheffield CAMRA Gold Edition (ABV 4.3%). Using Challenger hops and double dry hopping (Goldings), this beer was created to mark the 50th anniversary of CAMRA Sheffield & District.



In 2000, Bass sold its brewing operations to the Belgian brewer Interbrew, who were ordered by the Competition Commission to sell the Stones brand. In 2002, the brand was bought by the Coors Brewing Company, which merged to become Molson Coors in 2005.

After the 1998 closure, the brewery site was unused and became derelict. On 9 August 2015, planning permission for demolition was obtained by Hague Plant Ltd.<sup>6</sup> This never occurred.

On 13 August 2024, hybrid planning permission was obtained by Capital & Centric.<sup>7</sup> The outline plans include repurposing several buildings, new builds of cultural and workspaces and over 500 homes, a new public square and an urban park. The brewhouse, grain warehouse and water tower were to be retained.

Subsequent investigation has shown the grain store to be in a critical state of disrepair: Regent Street Disease (corrosion of the steel frame within a masonry-clad building) is prevalent. There is also cracking of concrete on the façade and deterioration of the roof slab. It is likely that the grain store will have to be demolished.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>6</sup> SCC planning application, August 2015, ref no 15/00107/FUL

<sup>7</sup> SCC planning application, August 2024 ref no 23/01746/OUT

<sup>8</sup> SCC planning application, April 2025, ref no 23/01746/COND7

## ■ Heist Brew Co

107 Neepsend Lane, S3 8AT  
Kelham Island Industrial Conservation Area  
[camra.org.uk/pubs/194449](http://camra.org.uk/pubs/194449)

Heist started brewing in an ex-school classroom (Mill Street, Clowne, Derbyshire, S43 4JN) in 2018. In August 2021, having relocated, they opened their brewery and taproom in the Radiac Works – 600 m<sup>2</sup> of ex-industrial premises.



At the time, the Sheffield City Council planning officers' report commented:

*"... the brewery element would accord with the UDP General Industrial designation, while the bar and restaurant element would complement the Neepsend area, which has been in transition and comprises a mix of commercial and food and drink uses. The design elements would have an acceptable impact on the character of the building and wider Conserva-*

tion Area and would improve the appearance of this derelict building in the street scene.”<sup>9</sup>



Earlier users of this red-brick building include MPD Power, Radiac Works, and Viking Engineering Services Ltd.

In 2023, Heist won the Gold Award for Champion Beer of Sheffield at the 47th Sheffield Steel City Beer Festival, with a hazy session IPA, The Bad Part of Gnome Town (ABV 4.6%).



<sup>9</sup> SCC planning application, June 2024, ref no 20/00925/FUL



In April 2024, brewing was suspended. Early in the following year, some of the brewing equipment was removed. Heist branded beers are currently brewed at Attic Brew Co (Stirchley, B30 2DA). It is anticipated that brewing will recommence in the near future.



For a short period, there was also an onsite distillery, Trifecta, producing gin and vodka. Their bottles were made from aluminium and designed for reuse – often as a water bottle.

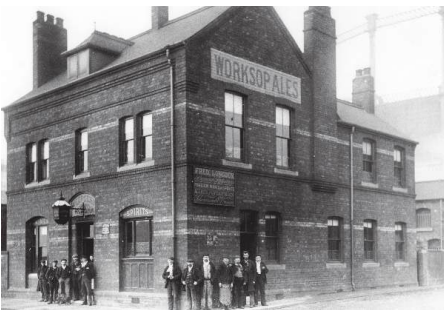


## ■ Neepsend Tavern

144 Neepsend Lane, S3 8AW

Diagonally opposite Heist is a building which was the Neepsend Tavern (1839–1974).<sup>10</sup> At the time of this image, the early 20th century, it was one of the more outlying pubs of the tied estate of the Worksop and Retford Brewery Company (WRB).

This brewery was founded in 1881 following a merger between the Prior Well and Smith & Nephew breweries. Before the merger, the Neepsend Tavern was one of the pubs owned by the Worksop-based, Prior's Well Brewery, under the ownership of Fossick Alderson and Joseph Garside. A large regional company, WRB were taken over by Sheffield-based Tennant Brothers in 1959. Their brewery was demolished in 1962.



<sup>10</sup> Picture Sheffield s06928

During the 1864 Sheffield flood, the pub was severely damaged. The tenant, Mary Dyson, made a successful claim:

*Claimant:* Mary Dyson, widow publican of:  
Neepsend Tavern, Neepsend, Sheffield

*Claimed:* £226 12s 8d

*Award:* Assessed by agreement incl. costs at £205

*Granted:* 27 June 1865

Since closure as a pub, the building has taken a variety of roles, including as Brodie and Short Ltd (building contractors) and the Crystal Suite (sauna). More recently, it hosted several licensed events. In 2024, it reopened as Kelham News. Some Victorian tiling remains around the front door.

In 2024, there was a successful planning application to change the building into eleven commercial units.<sup>11</sup>



<sup>11</sup> SCC planning application, June 2024, ref no 23/01643/FUL

# Timelines

## 1800 Pubs and Bars

As well as the **Gardeners Rest** and **Forest** pubs (and former Neepsend Tavern), **Alder**, **Church – Temple of Fun**, **Cutlery Works** and **Heist Brew Co** have been established in former works along the route.

## Breweries

After **Stones Cannon Brewery** dominated a large site in Neepsend for more than a century, the last couple of decades have seen the arrival of a number of new breweries including **Toolmakers**, **Neepsend**, **Heist** and **Duality**.

## Ball Street Works

The mid 19<sup>th</sup> century saw three works built around Ball Street Bridge. **Cornish** and **Brooklyn Works** have been converted into apartments and offices while **Lion Works** continues to be in commercial and industrial use.

## 1900

**Albyn Works**  
● 1875 Opens

**Samuel Osborn & Co**

● 1885 Rutland Works purchased and expanded

**Gardeners Rest**

● 1899–1900 Rebuilt

**Rutland Cutlery Works**

● c1920 Opens

● 1919–20

Insignia Works designed and built by William Hale

**Stones Cannon Brewery**

● 1868 Cannon Brewery acquired by William Stones

● **Strout's Brewery 1889** Name registered

● 1894 William Stones dies

● 1918 Taken over by Tennants

**Hope & Anchor Brewery**

● 1939 Opens as Hope Brewery

● 1942 Becomes Hope & Anchor Brewery

● 1948 Stones Bitter first brewed

● 1960 Becomes part of Northern Breweries

● 1962 Becomes part of Charrington United Breweries

● 1967 Becomes part of Bass Charrington

● 1968 Becomes part of Bass Charrington

● 1980 Acquired by Aurora Steels Ltd

● 1980s Closes

● 1990s JC Albyn Complex opens

● **Sheffield Brewery**

● 2006 Opens

● 1999

Becomes free house

● 1994–96 Sheffield Gold marketing campaign

● 1999 Closes

● 1992 Closes

● 2009 Closes

● 2017 Becomes community run

● **Church – Temple of Fun**

2018 Opens in former Insignia Works

● **Alder** 2021 Opens after brewery closes

● **Duality Brew Co**

● 2024 Opens in Todwick before moving to JC Albyn Complex

**Toolmakers Brewery**

● 2012 **Neepsend Brew Co**

Opens ● 2015 Opens in Lion Works

● **Heist Brew Co**

● 2018 Opens in Clowne

● 2020 Moves to Burton Road

● 2021 Moves to Neepsend

● 2023 Wins CBoS

● 2025 Brewery equipment removed

## 2000

## Floods

● 11 Mar 1864

**Great Sheffield Flood**

When the Dale Dyke Dam broke in 1864, a wall of water swept down the valley killing over 200 and devastating areas along its path, including Neepsend.

● 2007 **Sheffield Flood**

Heavy rainfall caused the River Don to burst its banks. Two died and many properties in Neepsend were damaged.

● 25 Jun 2007

## Rolling Mills

**Neepsend Rolling Mills** operated for nearly a century before their closure in the 1980s and demolition in the 2000s.

### Cornish Works

● 1828 Opens

### Alfred Beckett Brooklyn Works

● c1850 Opens

### Lion Works

● 1860s Opens

### Neepsend Rolling Mills

● c1876 Opens

## Community

In their different ways, **Peddler Market**, **Naomi's Corner** and occupants of **Rutland Hall** have aimed to serve the local community.

● 1896 Helen Wilson Settlement founded  
**Rutland Hall**  
 ● 1906 Opens as new premises for the HWS

● 1967 Acquired by Tempered Spring Company Ltd  
 ● 1969 South Yorkshire Printers Ltd moves in

● early 1980s Closes

● 1984 Closes

● 1985 Grade II listed

● late 1990s Conversion to apartments and offices

● 2003 Manufacturing ceases  
 ● 2002-06 Demolished and flats built on the site

● 2010 Closes

### Neepsend Brew Co

● 2015 Opens

● 2017 Managed by In2Change

● 2020 Moves to Burton Road

### Naomi's Corner

● 2021 Opens

## Transport

**Sheffield Tramway** (that in Neepsend once extended along Mowbray Street and Neepsend Lane) ceased operating in 1960 while the railway continued to carry freight until 2024. Both bridges date from after the 1864 **Great Sheffield Flood** with **Ball Street Bridge** being widened in 1900. The walk also takes in a section of the **Upper Don Trail**. This 15 mile route along the Upper Don Valley to Oughtibridge has been established over the past two decades by a dedicated charity.

### Woodhead line

● 1845 Opens

### Neepsend Bridge

● 1854 Opens

### Ball Street Bridge

c1856 Opens

● 1864 Destroyed and rebuilt

### Sheffield Tramway

● 1873-77

New horse-drawn service expanded (including route to Owlerton)

### Stocksbridge line

● 1877 Opens

### Neepsend railway station

● 1888 Opens

● 1896 Sheffield Corporation takes over network

● 1902-05

Network electrification completed and new route to Owlerton along Neepsend Lane opens

● 1900 Widened

### Neepsend railway station

● 1940 Closes

● 1960 Trams cease to run

● 1970 Passenger service ends

● 1981 Sheffield-Manchester through route closes

● 1985 Bridge and weir Grade II listed

● 1995 Grade II listed

### Upper Don Walk Trust

● 2004 Charity formed

### Upper Don Trail Trust

● 2019 Renamed

● 2020 Pedestrianised

● 2024 Mothballed by National Rail

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## SHEFFIELD PUB HERITAGE WALK

### 3 NEEPSSEND

This booklet describes a pub heritage walk (one mile) in the Neepsend area of Sheffield.

#### Included:

- Map and directions
- Information about places of interest
- Pub descriptions
- Timelines of events

#### Dave Pickersgill:

- Core member of CAMRA's Pub Heritage Group
- Editor of *Sheffield's Real Heritage Pubs*
- Local organiser of the 2023 Members' Weekend AGM & Conference
- CAMRA Campaigner of the Year 2025 runner-up

**RRP: £2.99**

  
**CAMRA**  
Sheffield & District



#### Booklet sponsors:



#### Alder

An all-inclusive bar housed in an ex-brewery in a Victorian polish factory, serving cask beer, keg beer and a variety of spirits.



#### Gardeners Rest

Taken over by the Gardeners Rest Community Society in 2017, this friendly well-run free house dates back to the 1890s.