



# St Edmundsbury Cathedral



## SIGNS OF THE TIMES Castle Hedingham to Clare

Discover more about Magna Carta connections which link Castle Hedingham and Clare. You can combine this walk with 'Clare to Bury St Edmunds' to create a longer 28 mile walk.

| FROM             | To    | OS MAP      | MILES/KM |
|------------------|-------|-------------|----------|
| Castle Hedingham | Clare | 195/196/210 | 9/14     |

### Castle Hedingham to Clare

**1 Start at St Nicholas' Church, Castle Hedingham.** Exit the churchyard by the war memorial into Falcon Square and to the right of Falcon House, head up Castle Lane to face the entrance to Hedingham Castle on Bayley Street.



**Castle Hedingham and Pilgrims** As you head off on this pilgrimage, consider the position of Castle Hedingham in medieval times. It may have been a stopping point for pilgrims on their way to Walsingham. On land which is now the recreation ground, there used to be a building called New Abbey, or the Hospital, founded by Hugh de Vere in 1250. There was also a Chapel of St James nearby, which suggests pilgrims visiting.

**2 The Castle** is now a private venue, opening regularly for special events ([hedinghamcastle.co.uk](http://hedinghamcastle.co.uk)). The official start of the waymarked Magna Carta trail is at Pye Corner (left down Bayley Street, then take footpath alongside houses on the right), but for better glimpses of the castle and its grounds, go right along Bayley Street to Forge Green (village sign and Magna Carta information boards on right). Cross over to the castle side of the road and go left briefly along St James' Street towards Sudbury.

**3 Take the footpath (left) uphill** alongside the castle lake and park to Rosemary Lane. Turn left along the metalled road towards Rushley Green. At the triangle of wet woodland (information board), it's worth continuing along the lane to view thatched Keeper's Cottage, historic 'Yeomans' and to look back down across idyllic meadow slopes towards the village. Retrace your steps to the triangle and pick up Magna Carta Trail waymarkers which lead you all the way to Clare. Here, they point through the wood to a small road. This becomes a track on the approach to Great Lodge Farm.

**4 Keep left by the farm gate.** This grassy track soon continues between fields, then across arable land to meet Colliersley Wood.

**5 Go left along the woodland edge** and field margin. Follow signs over a footbridge to field margin paths high above Belchamp Brook, with views down towards working farms and a striking red brick mansion. The path eventually meets up with a track which goes down to meet North End Road. Turn left past 'The Lantern' and cattery and continue briefly along the road.

**6 Look out for a footpath sign in the hedge (right)** – the hole alongside it may be slightly overgrown! The path goes down and diagonally across the arable field to a large footbridge with metal railings. Turn left, then head straight up to meet a road. Turn right onto the road, past the old windmill base at Mill Cottage and Hopkin's Farm (left), then pink St Mary's Hall (right) towards cream-coloured Brook Farm with its long run of brick outbuildings.

**7 Just before Brook Farm, head left along a very long concrete track** to a concrete 'apron'. Turn left, then right along a field edge (hedge right). The waymarkers lead right, then left to reach the road at Knowl Green.

**8 Turn left past the former Cherry Tree pub** (left) and Georgian Hole Farm (right), turning right to follow the road all the way to the junction at Cut Bush Farm.

**9 Go straight across into Long Lane** (Cut Bush Farm right) which soon shows itself to be a tree-lined green lane with occasional views across the Stour Valley to Suffolk fields beyond. As the lane descends to the road it is at times lined with gabions.



**Long Lane** As you walk along this ancient trackway, ponder the pilgrims who have gone before you on foot or perhaps on horseback.

**10 With views of Clare Castle ahead, turn right along the road** (Hickfords Hill), then left onto a footpath across a field to a wooden footbridge over the Stour with a stile. The path goes ahead across the meadow to a gate by the granary building and Mill House.



**11 Go over the old railway bridge** to houses, bearing left (Bayley Close) to descend into Castle Park by the old railway platform (and tearooms). Climb up the castle motte (right) for great views of Clare.

**12 To view the shrine or church at Clare Priory** or rest in its peaceful gardens, continue along the bank of the Stour (river on right) to find the wooden gate in the garden wall.