



St Edmundsbury Cathedral



SIGNS OF THE TIMES Clare to Bury St Edmunds

A route probably followed by medieval pilgrims linking the Priory at Clare with the Abbey in Bury St Edmunds

FROM	To	OS MAP	MILES/KM
Clare	Bury St Edmunds	210/211	19/31

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This beautiful walk takes you through fertile Suffolk countryside, much of it along footpaths. It takes at least 7 hours and is best done when the day is long enough and the conditions are dry. The path is marked on OSExplorer 210 and 211. Some of the path takes you over fields, which may be muddy with heavy clay. In midsummer you will be treated to orchids and many other wildflowers. Take provisions with enough water for the day.

Clare is a medieval town with lots to see.



Clare Priory You might wish to start the walk with a visit to Clare Priory, a working Augustinian Monastery at the base of Clare Castle. A mass is held every week day at 10.00 am, to which everyone is welcome. To get there from the bus-stop follow along the road for a short distance and turn left down The Broadway, where you cross a small bridge at the bottom and open an ancient door. The church is then visible across the grounds, constructed from a medieval building with a beautiful modern extension, consecrated in 2015¹.

Starting the walk, proceed down the High St heading north and passing the very beautiful parish church of St Peter and St Paul². About 500m on, turn right down Hermitage Meadow onto a track, where you turn left as soon as you are past the houses. This takes you across two small fields to a track, which you follow for around 2km to reach New House Lane.

¹ Clare Priory <https://clarepriory.org.uk/>

² Church of St Peter and St Paul <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/2115/>

Go across New House Lane to join a bridle path, which comes out with a big field on the right. Turn right at the end of this field, then left at the bottom, and follow along a track with Kings' Wood on the right. At the bottom of this field, you turn left, and watch out for a turning on the right where do a wiggle to cross into the next field with the hedge on the left. Keep going down to the corner, where there is a bridle path, which you follow until you come out on the road at the "High Street" of Upper Street, a small hamlet where there is a pub if you continue on with a small detour.



Before you get to the pub, the footpath turns off the road at Upper Street on the right and takes you into the grounds of Stansfield Hall farmstead, where you turn left down a track. The footpath then turns right across a field at the position of the telegraph pole, where it follows round and out on the lane to Thurston Hall, a Grade I listed manor house.

Turn left at Thurston Hall and take the footpath right which appears shortly afterwards. This takes you along a track with the river Glem on the left, down to Gallowgate Farm, where you cross the river. Turn left along the lane known as Lower Street, which heads towards Hawkedon. Before you get there the footpath turns right up a steep hill and across a field towards Somerton Church.



St Margaret's, Somerton. There is a bench here, which makes a very welcome stopping point. Pause here, at one of the highest churches in Suffolk (though nothing is very high in Suffolk). A good place to think about the beauty of God's creation.

From Somerton Church turn left down the lane to Francis Farm and continue along the track to Britton's Farm and out onto Cook's Lane, where you turn right as if going to Brockley Green. The footpath takes you left after about 400m, and bears left again to Hawk's Farm, where you turn right down a track towards Brockley church.

Before you reach the church, the path bears left and along the right side of a field, then across another field before doing a wiggle left then right across another field and into Rushbottom Wood. Keep going until you come out onto a muddy track heading towards Stonecross Farm, turning right before you get there and across a large field, and into the next one with the hedge on the left. As you go round the path turns right across the field, then down and across a small bridge, coming out in a field adjacent to the Brockley Road.

Turn right to walk around the field and cross the road, entering the opposite field, where the path follows round, eventually coming out at the lane coming from Mickley Green by Riches Farm. Turn left on the road here, and follow round to the junction on Mickley Green, which takes you down Bull Lane to Bull Green and Pinford End.

At the junction turn left and keep on the road now, climbing what seems like a long hill towards Bury St Edmunds. At the top turn right down Park Lane, then left by a hedge, following round to a track, which goes right down to a lane where you turn left. Keep going straight, so when the lane turns right you



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continue along an unmade track, which follows round and comes out on the Nowton Road opposite the sports ground.

Turn left and keep straight on back to the centre of Bury St Edmunds. If you have the energy for a “final flourish” you can enter the town along the river Lark path, found just beyond the BP garage visible on the right when you reach the second roundabout. This path takes you to the back of the Abbey Gardens, where you can enter the town via the Great Churchyard, or (if the gardens are still open!) through the gardens and out of the Abbeygate.

