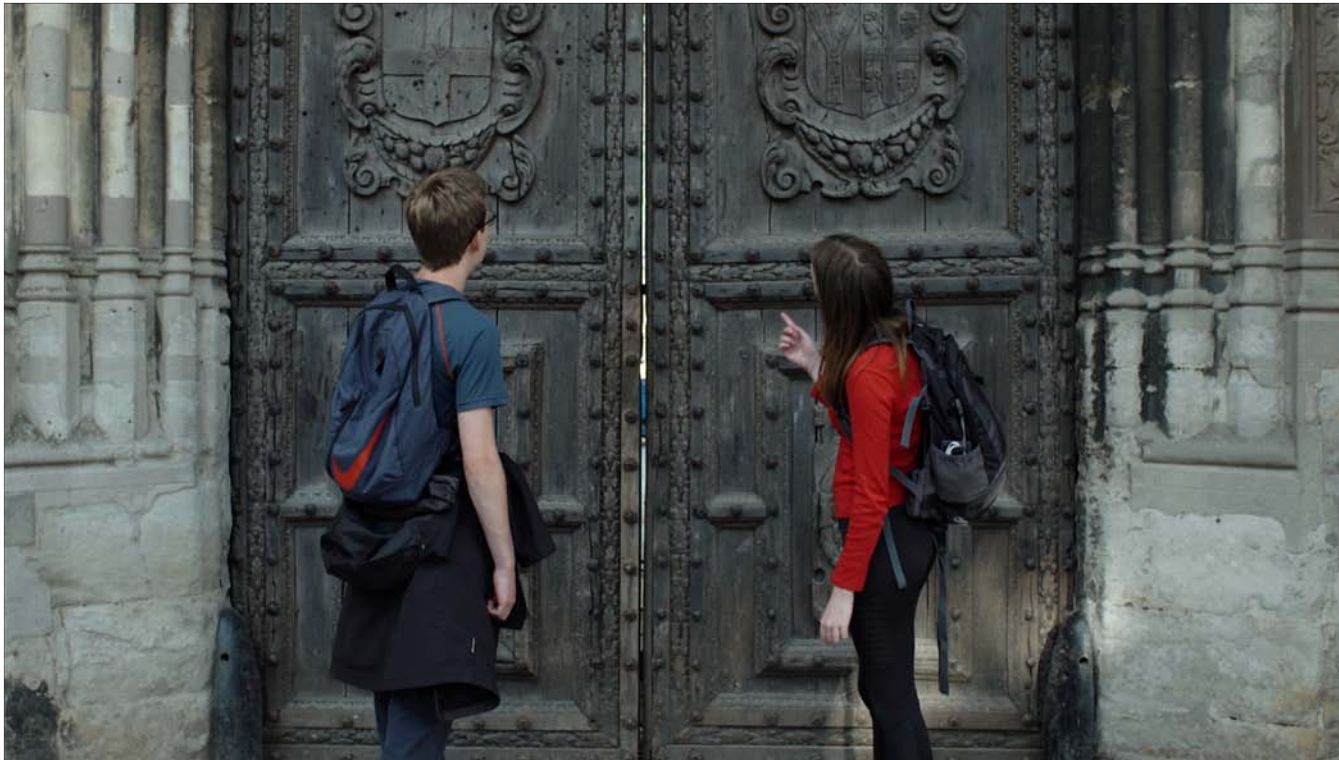




# Canterbury City Pilgrim Tour

**3.7 miles (5.9 km)** allow 2 to 3 hours

Take the Pilgrims Way through medieval Canterbury's less frequented streets, the walk will reveal riverside gardens, tiny chapels and ancient hospitals which lodged poor pilgrims and are still used today.



Young couple admiring Canterbury Cathedral Gate, point 13 on the map

## How to get there -

**Parking:** Station Road West multistorey car park.

**Train:** Nearest station: Canterbury West (Start and end point of walk)

**Bus:** Nearest service no. 27

<b>S/F</b>	Start/Finish	Station Road West car park CT2 8AN
<b>///</b>	what3words	barn.impact.piano
<b>□</b>	Stiles	0
<b>   </b>	Gates	0
<b>▲</b>	Terrain	Mostly flat. Asphalt, paved.
<b>↗</b>	Steps	0
<b>☀</b>	Views	Historic cityscapes and river views
<b>☕</b>	Refreshments	The Goods Shed

## Route directions

1. Coming out of the Car Park walk towards the junction with St, Dunstan's Street.
2. Turn Right Walk uphill to St. Dunstan's Church noting on the right the splendid Elizabethan Roper Gate which led to the home of William Roper who married Sir Thomas More's daughter, Margaret.
3. Turn Right From here walk eastwards along St. Dunstan's Road to Westgate.
4. Straight Ahead. From here walk eastwards along St. Peter's Street to Franciscan Gardens, Greyfriars.
5. Straight Ahead. From here walk across King's Bridge to the Hospital of St. Thomas, Eastbridge.
6. Straight Ahead. From the hospital walk a short distance eastwards to the junction of St. Peter's Street and Stour Street.
7. Turn Right. Proceed down Stour Street to the Poor Priests Hospital.
8. Straight Ahead. Continue southwards to the corner Stour Street and Hospital Lane.
9. Turn Left up Hospital Lane to Castle street.
10. Turn Left. Continue Northward up Castle street to the junction of Castle street and Beer Cart Lane.
11. Straight Ahead. Continue directly across Beer cart Lane onto St. Margaret's Street (passing the Whitefriars Centre to your right, named after the former Carmelite Monastery of which nothing remains) until you come to the Junction with The Parade (a continuation of Saint Peter's Street) Opposite the former Checkers Inn.
12. Straight Ahead. Continue northward straight up Mercery lane to the Christchurch Gate on corner of Sun Street and Burgate.

13. Turn Right eastwards down Burgate to the crossing with Broad Street.
14. Crossing Broad Street continue straight up Church Street, St. Paul's to the old Augustinian cemetery gate at the intersection of Monastery Street and Love Lane.
15. Turn Right. Travel a short distance along Love Lane to the corner of Longport.
16. Turn Left. Follow Longport eastwards to the entrance of the former Abbey of St. Augustines.
17. Straight Ahead. Continue to the left of the roundabout straight up Longport to the corner of Longport ( A258) and North Holmes Road opposite the Almshouses of John and Anne Smith.
18. Turn Left. Walk up North Holmes Road to the Lych gate of St. Martin's church. Then retrace your steps down Longport to the corner of Longport and Love Lane.
19. Turn Right. Pass through Love lane which continues on as Monastery Street until you come to the main abbey gates of Saint Augustine's.
20. Turn Left. From the gate cross Lady Wooton's Green to the crossing on Broad Street.
21. After the crossing turn right with the walls of the city to your left and proceed past the buildings of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust to the continuation of Broad Street where it branches left and leaves the main road.
22. Turn Left. Continue down Broad street to where it meets Northgate.
23. Turn Right. Proceed northwards to the gates of St. John's Hospital on the left of Northgate.
24. Turn Left. Retrace your steps but continue straight on down Northgate from where it turns to The Borough and on to Mint Yard Gate on the left.

25. Turn Right. From the gate follow The Borough for a short distance until it becomes King street. Continue along King street until you reach the entrance to the Old Synagogue.
26. Straight Ahead. Continue along King street to the corner of Blackfriars Street.
27. Straight Ahead. Having seen Blackfriars continue onwards down King Street to where it meets The Friars.
28. Turn Right. Turn down The Friars and over the bridge (where it affords excellent views of the river and buildings of Blackfriars). Before reaching the Marlowe Theatre leave the road to take the Victoria Walk.
29. Turn Right. Leaving The Friars bear right along the river and past the old Dominican pilgrim's guest hall of Blackfriars (Now Beerling Hall) to follow The Victoria Walk to Solley's Orchard.
30. Turn right from The Victoria Walk shortly before it joins St. Peter's Lane and take the walled doorway into the pleasant riverside walk of Solley's Orchard leading across the weir and down to the exit at Pound Lane.
31. Turn Left. Take pound Lane as far as the junction with The Causeway.
32. Turn Right. At the junction of Pound Lane take the Causeway a short distance to join the footpath towards the river.
33. Turn Left. Take the footpath through Millers green that leads to the bridge over the river.
34. Turn Left. After crossing the bridge take the path southwards along the river Stour and past the city wall to Westgate.
35. Turn Right. Walking back up St. Dunstan's Street from Westgate continue to the junction with Station Road West.
36. Turn Right. Proceed to the end of the route and return to the Car Park or Train Station. End of Route is Station Road West Car Park.

## Points of interest

**3. St. Dunstan' Church** was for many Pilgrims the church that marked the end of their journey to Canterbury it was here that Henry II put on his hair shirt to start his barefoot penitential procession to the shrine of his murdered friend St. Thomas. Here also is the site of the rather grisly burial of Sir Thomas More's head, brought here after its display in London by his daughter and deposited under the floor of the Roper chapel. Sainly relics of St. Dunstan drew pilgrimage here well before the martyrdom of Thomas Becket.

**4. Westgate**, the largest surviving medieval city gate in England. Built around 1379 by Archbishop Simon Sudbury who died in the peasants' revolt of 1381. Here Pilgrims would have passed into the walled city either directly to the shrine or to find lodgings in one of the many monasteries, hospitals or inns.

**5. The sign of the Franciscan Gardens** marks the entrance to Greyfriars, the site of the House of the first Franciscan mission to England, established around 1224; only a few years after the foundation of the order dedicated it to the service of the poor by St. Francis. Beautiful riverside gardens and the site of a former guesthouse spanning the river are hidden within. Entrance £6.

**6. The Hospital of St. Thomas the Martyr upon Eastbridge.** Founded by one Edward FitzOdbold in 1190 under the patronage of the martyred Saint for the housing and healing of poor pilgrims. The entrance through a low Gothic door reveals a medieval hospital which is still run by the Master for the care of poor Brothers and Sisters.

**8. Poor Priests Hospital.** Backing on to the River Stour this collection of buildings was founded as a hospital for the priests of poor parishes making the pilgrimage to Canterbury, as such Chaucer's parson would have stayed here. It was substantially rebuilt in 1373 to care for sick and aging priests.

**9. Maynard and Cotton's Spital.** A charming almshouse of great antiquity being originally founded as a hospital for pilgrims during the reign of Henry II by 'Maynier the Rich'. The current post-reformation almshouse remains essentially unchanged from 1604.

**12. The Chequers of the Hope on the corner of Mercery Lane.** A former pilgrim's lodgings and Inn made famous by Chaucer in his Canterbury Tales and the Tales of Beryn 'Atte 'Checker of the hope,' that many a man south knowe.' Currently a sweet shop.

**13. Christchurch Gate.** This is the main gate to the Cathedral and thus to the former shrine of Thomas the Martyr. The extensive Cathedral grounds were the site of the Benedictine Priory of Christchurch where the first pilgrims were lodged. The gate itself is an exceptional example of early Tudor architecture (circa 1507) with two octagonal towers and the arms of the new Tudor dynasty. Much of the decoration was destroyed by the sinister 17th century iconoclast 'Blue Dick Culmer'. The Via Francigena to Rome begins here at the south portico of the Cathedral. The Cathedral is a UNESCO world heritage site of great interest whose wonders are too extensive to list.

**17. St. Augustine's Abbey.** Entrance to the English Heritage site. The abbey was destroyed in the reformation and remains largely in ruins but was importantly the site of St. Augustine of Canterbury's first Christian mission to England. It was also the burial place of the Kings of Kent and the early Archbishops of Canterbury. The abbey and the church of St. Martin's are a UNESCO world heritage site.

**18.** Across the road can be seen the handsome **17th century Flemish Gabled Almshouses of John and Anne Smith** founded in 1657 for the housing of the 'needy'. Although not medieval they are remarkably similar to the Catholic Godhuizen in Bruges and give a good idea of how the concept of provision for the poor continued after the reformation.

**The ancient Church of St. Martins.** The Church is distinguished as being the oldest place of continuous Christian worship in Britain. It is notable as the place of worship by queen Bertha of Kent, and therefore slightly precedes her and her husband's invitation to the mission of St. Augustine of AD 597. The walls contain both Roman and Saxon elements. UNESCO world heritage site.

**20. The Great Gate of St. Augustine's Abbey.** A splendid example of the 14th century decorated style but with traces of the coming perpendicular. It was through this gate that the four murderous knights found shelter with the Abbot of Saint Augustine's (no friend of Thomas Becket's) before proceeding the following day to slay the 'Hooly blisful Martir' on the 29th of December 1170. It now forms part of The King's School.

**24. The Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Northgate.** The oldest operating almshouse in England, founded by Archbishop Lanfranc of Pavia in 1185. Situated just outside the city walls in Northgate this hospital predates the martyrdom of Becket and in all likelihood was established to tender to the miserable condition of the Saxon population so recently fallen from grace. It certainly lodged pilgrims coming to the shrine of the saint, being by then a very large establishment able to provision up to 100 'needy folk'. The original gatehouse, somewhat camouflaged by substantial later additions, leads into the quiet haven within: Residents still inhabit the restored and largely Victorian almshouses surrounding the green but the Chapel and Refectory continue to evoke the ancient character of the establishment as do the early and arguably oldest latrines in the country.

**25. Mint Yard Gate.** The main entrance to The King's School Canterbury which lays claim to be Britain's oldest public school. The school currently occupies much of the former Benedictine Priory of Christchurch. Through the gate you can make out the romanesque Great Gate of Christchurch and above the remains of the hall that housed the first pilgrims. The Norman staircase that leads to it is the only surviving example in England. Entrance is not permitted at Mint Yard gate but one can gain access through the Cathedral by purchasing a ticket.

**26. The Old Synagogue.** Interesting to the architectural pilgrim for its unusual Egyptian revival facade, and considered to be the best of its kind, it was begun in 1846 by Hezekiah Marshall and is now a part of The King's School music department.

**27.** At the end of Blackfriars Street can be seen the remains of the **13th century refectory of the Dominican Friars** whose site straddled the stour, the guest hall for pilgrims being on the West bank and formerly accessed by a bridge. It is currently occupied by The King's School.



5. Greyfriars St Franciscan Gardens



13. Cathedral doorway



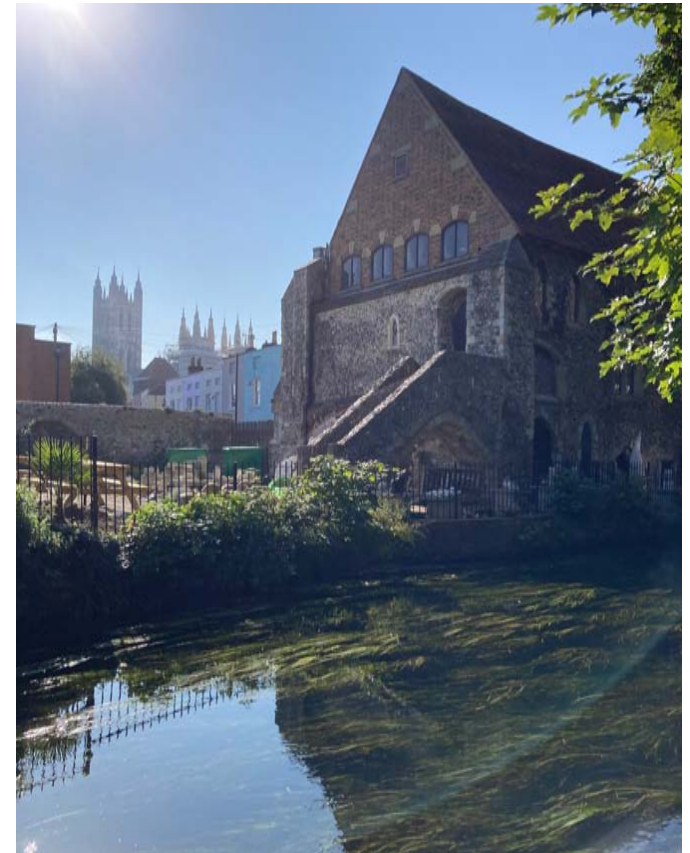
18. St Martin's Church



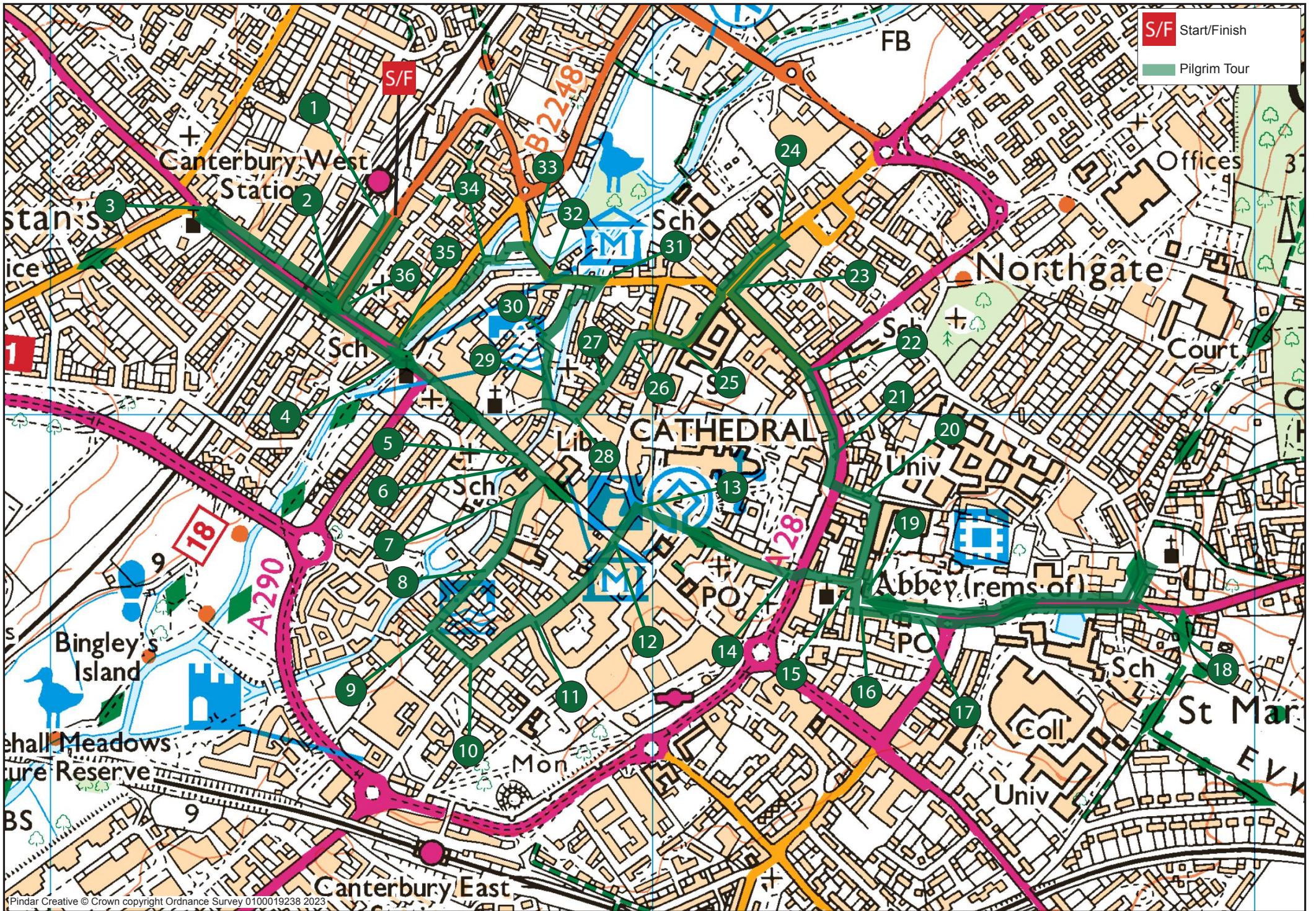
6. Eastbridge Hospital



13. Canterbury Christchurch Cathedral



30. Solly's Orchard and River Stour



**S/F** Start/Finish  
 Pilgrim Tour