

## ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

### FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 1 (first and last sections)

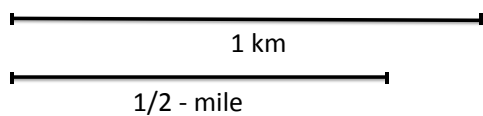
#### ROADS:

- Significant roads
- Others - on route
- Others - adjoining

#### PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining

Scale (approx.):



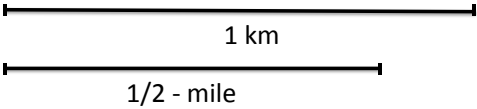
**88** Direction label (as in the walk notes)

Starting direction

# ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

FULL CIRCUIT - Sheet 2  
(middle section)

Scale (approx.):



88 Direction label (as in the walk notes)

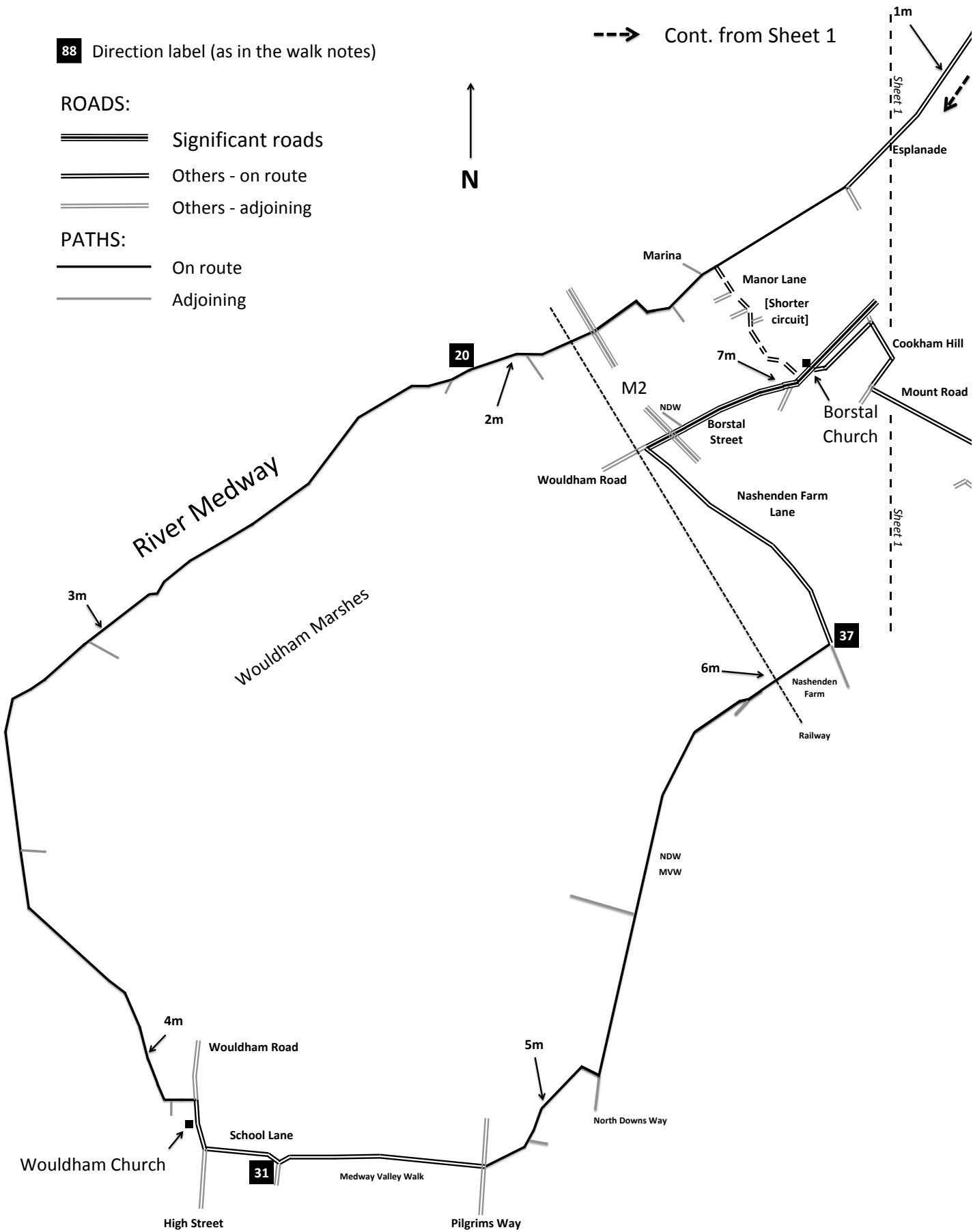
ROADS:

- Significant roads
- Others - on route
- Others - adjoining

PATHS:

- On route
- Adjoining

Cont. from Sheet 1



## **ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL CIRCUIT - 12.58 miles**

### **Churches in the full circuit:**

Rochester St Margaret (Direction 8)

Wouldham (29)

Borstal (41)

Rochester St Justus (50)

Emmaus Christian Centre (77)

Chatham St John (80)

Rochester Cathedral (103)

### **Associated local circuits**

- RS1: South Rochester – Borstal – Rochester – South Rochester
- SW2: Borstal – Wouldham – Medway Valley Walk / North Downs Way – Borstal
- CS1: Luton – South Chatham – South Rochester – South Chatham – Luton
- MN1: Chatham – Gillingham – Darland Banks – Luton – Chatham

**Full circuit:** This, along with its shorter counterpart, is the only walk in the entire project which is not (quite) fully circular. It seems appropriate to cast the cathedral in the role of a final destination, and if 'final' it follows that it should not be the walk's starting point. So it starts round the corner at Rochester station. (And it so happens that there is no significant view of the cathedral before the very end, protecting its 'climax' status!)

In between built-up Rochester and bustling Chatham there is riverside beauty between Borstal and Wouldham, and, after a brisk climb, the magnificent stretch shared by the Medway Valley Walk and the North Downs Way with views of the river and far beyond.

### **Roads and hindrances:**

There are some major roads to cross (Directions 2, 46, 60, 66, 72, 75, 84 and 92), but all have lights, islands or reasonable sightlines.

The rise from Wouldham to the North Downs Way (32-33) hardly qualifies as a hindrance, but demands a little respect.

### **FULL CIRCUIT**

**Rochester – Wouldham – Medway Valley Walk / North Downs Way – Borstal – South Rochester – Chatham – Rochester**

Notes taken: April 2017 and November to December 2019

The start and finish are at Rochester station (ME1 1NH) and Rochester Cathedral (near ME1 1LB) respectively.

|    | Mins.*    |   | OS      | Miles |
|----|-----------|---|---------|-------|
| 1  |           | At the exit from Rochester station, head towards the main road and on reaching it turn left to walk along its left-hand side towards the light-controlled pedestrian crossing about 150 yds. along. | 745 686 |       |
| 2  | <b>1</b>  | Go across, and then continue along the road a little further.   |         |       |
| 3  | <b>2</b>  | After about 40 yds. turn right up Blue Boar Lane.   |         |       |
| 4  | <b>3</b>  | At the end turn left briefly along the High Street.   |         |       |
| 5  |           | Turn right up Crow Lane.  |         |       |
| 6  | <b>6</b>  | Reach a junction and fork right alongside a school.   |         |       |
| 7  | <b>8</b>  | At the T-junction at the top, turn right.   |         |       |
| 8  | <b>10</b> | At the next T-junction turn left, soon passing <b>St Margaret's Church</b> on the right.  | 741 682 |       |
| 9  | <b>12</b> | Just beyond Watts Avenue opposite, turn right, down away from the road, along Backfields.   |         |       |
| 10 |           | After about 40 yds. turn right, then left, down a long series of steps, down the edge of the field.   |         |       |
| 11 | <b>15</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> Turn left at the bottom to walk along the Esplanade.   |         | 0.69  |
| 12 | <b>27</b> | When the road swings away to the left, instead carry straight on along the footpath, before long among trees.   | 733 673 |       |
| 13 | <b>34</b> | Near Beacon Boatyard and, on the left, a children's playground, continue straight ahead, still parallel to the river.   |         | 1.56  |
| 14 |           | Where the driveway to Medway Bridge Marina turns away right, instead take the path forking up to the left.  |         |       |
| 15 | <b>36</b> | Carry straight on, ignoring the waymarked left-turn.  |         |       |
| 16 | <b>37</b> | Follow the path as it turns right and left, bringing you directly alongside the river on your right.  |         |       |
| 17 | <b>39</b> | Go under the motorway bridge, and walk along a little path which emerges directly opposite, still heading on, parallel to the river, between fences on both sides.                                  |         |       |
| 18 | <b>42</b> | Pass a driveway on the left, and then go through to an old-style MKG next to a gate.  |         |       |
| 19 | <b>44</b> | After passing the mobile homes, continue ahead.   |         |       |
| 20 | <b>45</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> Keep to the right, to go up alongside the river again. Start out along the embankment which will take you most of the way to Wouldham.   |         | 2.15  |
| 21 | <b>63</b> | Ignore the left turn and continue straight ahead past the pylon.  |         | 3.05  |
| 22 | <b>65</b> | Go under power lines, and on.   | 708 659 |       |
| 23 | <b>72</b> | Ignore the roadway on the left, and still carry on.   |         |       |
| 24 | <b>77</b> | Stay with the embankment as it swings left, roughly following the power lines.  |         | 3.78  |
| 25 | <b>79</b> | Follow the path as it bends to the right.   |         |       |
| 26 | <b>85</b> | Start on a gradual swing to the left.   |         |       |
| 27 | <b>86</b> | By the signpost, keep left, and carry on towards the road.  |         |       |
| 28 | <b>87</b> | At the road, turn right.  |         |       |
| 29 | <b>88</b> | Pass the lych-gate of <b>Wouldham Church</b> .  |         | 4.26  |
| 30 | <b>89</b> | Turn left up School Lane (joining the Medway Valley Walk).  |         |       |
| 31 | <b>92</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> At the T-junction turn left and immediately swing right to stay on School Lane.  |         |       |

\* **"Mins."** is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

|    | Mins.*     |  | OS      | Miles |
|----|------------|--|---------|-------|
| 32 | <b>101</b> | At the top, cross the road and go ahead on a broad track among the trees (not into the drives to private properties left and right).   |         |       |
| 33 | <b>104</b> | Ignore the footpath on the right, but follow the main path as it goes on to swing to the right.  |         |       |
| 34 | <b>110</b> | At the top turn left to join the North Downs Way.  |         | 5.18  |
| 35 | <b>126</b> | Turn down to the left (NDW).   |         |       |
| 36 | <b>127</b> | Pass beside a gate, and on over a bridge and down all the way to the T-junction at the end.  | 730 657 | 6.03  |
| 37 | <b>130</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> At the end turn left, still NDW, as signposted.   |         |       |
| 38 | <b>140</b> | At the T-junction at the end turn right to go under the motorway bridges, and go on ahead up into Borstal.   |         |       |
| 39 | <b>141</b> | Continue ahead along the road (parting from the NDW as it disappears on the left by a gate). Cross when convenient.  |         |       |
| 40 | <b>144</b> | And still ahead, now in turn losing the MVW on the left.   |         |       |
| 41 | <b>146</b> | Reach Manor Road, with, just beyond it on the left, <b>Borstal Church</b> . Pass its door, cross the road and immediately go up along the access road above its right-hand side. | 732 668 | 7.05  |
| 42 | <b>150</b> | At the end of the access road turn right up Cookham Hill.  |         |       |
| 43 | <b>152</b> | At the top swing right with the road as it becomes Hill Road.  |         |       |
| 44 | <b>154</b> | Turn left into Mount Road.   |         |       |
| 45 | <b>159</b> | Follow the road as it swings right in two stages, then left.   |         |       |
| 46 | <b>166</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> At the end turn left to go briefly along the main road and cross it by means of the traffic island.   |         | 7.96  |
| 47 |            | Turn right down Hawser Road.   |         |       |
| 48 | <b>169</b> | At the bottom, reaching the major road, turn half-right along it, crossing as soon as is convenient.   |         |       |
| 49 | <b>170</b> | Turn sharp left up The Fairway.  |         |       |
| 50 | <b>172</b> | Pass the steps on the right leading to <b>St Justus Church</b> .   |         |       |
| 51 | <b>173</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> Turn left down Windward Road.   |         |       |
| 52 | <b>174</b> | Continue ahead, ignoring Leeward Road on the right.  |         |       |
| 53 | <b>177</b> | At the end turn left opposite the school.  |         |       |
| 54 | <b>178</b> | Turn right at the next T-junction.   |         |       |
| 55 | <b>180</b> | Continue ahead, ignoring Barnaby Terrace on the right.   |         |       |
| 56 | <b>182</b> | After swinging right at the bottom, turn left opposite the Co-op down Weller Avenue.   | 745 668 |       |
| 57 | <b>184</b> | Turn right, up Jasper Avenue.  |         | 8.93  |
| 58 | <b>186</b> | At the top turn left, and cross the road when convenient.  |         |       |
| 59 | <b>189</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> Turn very sharp right up Onslow Road, and after about 50 yds. follow it as it bends to the left, still uphill.  |         |       |
| 60 | <b>192</b> | At the top reach the main City Way, cross it using the traffic island over to the left, and turn left, briefly, along the far side.  |         |       |
| 61 |            | After a few yards turn right along the signposted footpath, up steps at first.   |         |       |
| 62 | <b>196</b> | Turn left along Boundary Road.   |         |       |
| 63 | <b>202</b> | At the top turn right.   |         | 9.77  |
| 64 | <b>204</b> | Ignore Ordnance Street on the right and continue ahead, keeping Chatham station on your left.  |         |       |

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|    | Mins.*     |   | OS      | Miles |
|----|------------|---|---------|-------|
| 65 | <b>205</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> Beyond the station swing right (Hills Terrace) but then, immediately after the entrance to the car park, turn left along an enclosed alleyway which, at its end, rises quite steeply to meet the next road.  |         |       |
| 66 | <b>207</b> | Cross the road with care (reasonable sightlines), and then start up Westmount Avenue opposite, soon swinging right with the road.   |         |       |
| 67 | <b>210</b> | At the end go down the passage at the left-hand corner (between houses 59 and 61) and down steps to a roadway.  |         |       |
| 68 | <b>211</b> | Go ahead, starting to make your way down to join the A2 (New Road) below, over to the left.   | 759 675 |       |
| 69 | <b>212</b> | There are various ways to achieve this, all obvious. Simplest is to go directly over the grass down to the road. But, if this looks too steep, perhaps head over to the left to the entrance of the subway, but turn right just before it. In any event it makes sense to stay to the right of New Road for the moment, to avoid traffic complications. |         |       |
| 70 | <b>213</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> At the bottom go ahead along the access road (parallel to New Road on your left).  |         |       |
| 71 | <b>214</b> | Move over to join the walkway alongside the A2 itself, heading towards to the junction and bridges in the middle distance.  |         |       |
| 72 | <b>218</b> | Now use the pedestrian crossing, and continue along the left-hand side of the A2.   |         |       |
| 73 | <b>219</b> | Reach the junction, meeting, on the left, the bottom leg of the big footbridge. Follow the pavement all the way round to the left, to go along the start of the High Street.  |         |       |
| 74 | <b>220</b> | <b>START OF THE SPINE SECTION</b><br>Pass and ignore Institute Road on the right. Then cross to the right-hand side when convenient (and before the busy road junction at the end).   | 764 675 | 10.55 |
| 75 | <b>222</b> | Reaching the junction, use the lights to go across the main road and continue along the High Street towards its pedestrian area.  |         |       |
| 76 | <b>226</b> | <b>[Map point]</b> Turn left up Clover Street.  |         |       |
| 77 | <b>227</b> | Pass the entrance of the shared <b>Emmaus Christian Centre</b> . Then go up the steps ahead on the right.   |         |       |
| 78 | <b>228</b> | Swing to the right along Rome Terrace, keeping to the right of the open-air car park.   |         |       |
| 79 | <b>230</b> | Approaching the end, continue ahead over the dead end of the roadway to merge alongside the busy road on the left.  |         |       |
| 80 | <b>231</b> | With <b>St John's Church</b> over on your left, turn right, away from the main road, down steps and along the pedestrian Railway Street.  |         |       |
| 81 | <b>232</b> | At the intersection, turn left, once again along High Street, and then continue straight ahead over the crossing.   | 757 679 |       |
| 82 | <b>234</b> | Joining a road at its right-angle bend, continue straight ahead.  |         |       |
| 83 | <b>236</b> | Turn left up Hamond Hill.   |         | 11.38 |
| 84 | <b>237</b> | At the top, using the island a few yards to the left, go across the A2, then rightwards up the angled walkway parallel to it.   |         |       |

\* ***"Mins."*** is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

|     | Mins.*     |  | OS      | Miles |
|-----|------------|--|---------|-------|
| 85  | <b>239</b> | [Map point] At the top, bear right to continue along the edge of Victoria Gardens, parallel to the road and above its left-hand side.  |         |       |
| 86  | <b>240</b> | Where the paths divide, keep right to go downhill.   |         |       |
| 87  |            | At the bottom cross the road and start along the walkway parallel to and about 20 yds. to the left of the main road.   | 753 678 |       |
| 88  | <b>241</b> | Ignore the first footpath going up to the left, and continue ahead.  |         |       |
| 89  | <b>243</b> | After gentle curves left and right, uphill, use the steps up to the left, and, after crossing a very rough road, continue up the angled pathway, still more or less parallel to the A2, but now well above it. |         |       |
| 90  | <b>244</b> | At the top go ahead, soon walking along the right-hand, bottom, edge of a sloping field and then a children's playground, with a bowling green and tennis courts below on the right.                           |         |       |
| 91  | <b>248</b> | Approaching the main road ahead, follow the path which forks left, heading towards a light-controlled pedestrian crossing.   |         |       |
| 92  |            | [Map point] Cross at the lights, and then turn right to go along the left-hand side of the road, crossing but ignoring The Cut on the left.  |         | 11.91 |
| 93  | <b>249</b> | Follow the access road which forks away on the left alongside house no.16., and at the end continue ahead down an enclosed pathway, which then rejoins the main road at its end.                               |         |       |
| 94  | <b>251</b> | Just before 'Crystal Palace' - no.46 - turn left down steps and go ahead to reach and cross the major road at the end.   |         |       |
| 95  |            | Once across, go straight ahead down the road opposite ( <i>and continue downhill with the OS-mapped footpath to the right currently closed for works - December 2019</i> ).                                    | 746 680 |       |
| 96  | <b>252</b> | <i>Turn right, just before the '20' speed limit sign, along the well-concealed St Peter's Path.</i>  |         |       |
| 97  | <b>253</b> | <i>At the end go up a few steps and turn left along the roadway.</i>   |         |       |
| 98  | <b>254</b> | At the junction, cross Cazeneuve Street and continue straight ahead up the hill (East Row), crossing to the right-hand side when convenient.   |         |       |
| 99  | <b>256</b> | Stay on the walkway as it reaches the junction. Then go straight ahead, using the traffic island to cross the road, and start along the path which diagonally crosses The Vines open space.                    |         |       |
| 100 | <b>259</b> | Leave The Vines by the far right-hand corner, and go ahead along the road.   |         |       |
| 101 | <b>260</b> | Follow the road as it bends, left at the end of King's Orchard ...   |         |       |
| 102 | <b>261</b> | ... then right, then gently left.  |         |       |
| 103 | <b>262</b> | On the right, reach the west door of <b>Rochester Cathedral</b> .<br><b>END OF THE SPINE ROUTE</b>   | 742 685 | 12.58 |

\* "**Mins.**" is very approximate! See 'Introductory Notes' for an explanation of how this column is used.

## FOR THOSE WHO WALK WITH THEIR DOGS

I do not venture to give advice about walking with your dog. As well as the joys, you will be well aware of the issues involved, and particularly that relationships between dogs and other countryside animals potentially involve mutual suspicion, or worse.

**But what this footnote does try to do, in response to requests, is to give some indication of the nature of the walk from a dog's point of view, to enable you to decide whether it is suitable.**

The percentage distances on the right (on the next page) should be self-explanatory.

The information in the middle column may look a bit cluttered, but I think it should enable you (if the detail is of interest) to mark up within a few minutes a print-out of the walk notes, so that you have some idea what might be round the next corner.

The risk in all this is that **things change so quickly** in the agricultural working world; and what I describe might become misleading after subsequent changes. I have done my best, but there is no guarantee that you will find the information up to date!

| <b>ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL<br/>- FULL CIRCUIT</b> | <b>Direction numbers</b>  | <b>%<br/>of walk</b> |
|---|---|----------------------|
| Busy road                                     | 1-5, 8, 11, 28-31, 38-40, 46, 48-49, 58, 60, 62-64, 70-72, 78-79, 82, 92, 93c, 98 | 28                   |
| Quiet road \$\$                               | 6-7, 9, 13, 37, 41-45, 47, 50-57, 59, 66, 68 73-74, 83, 93a, 94-95, 97, 100-102   | 26                   |
| Open field with livestock                     |   | 0                    |
| Edge of field with livestock                  |   | 0                    |
| Field (or edge) without livestock **          | 10b, 12a, 12c, 20-24, 25b, 25d, 34b-35, 69, 85-88, 90-91, 99                      | 28                   |
| Path (hedged, or otherwise forced)            | 10a, 14-19, 25a, 25c, 26-27, 32, 36, 61, 65, 67, 75-77, 80-81, 84, 89, 93b, 96    | 15                   |
| Woods   | 12b, 33-34a   | 3                    |

\*\* This is not a promise, just a statement of fact - that, having walked these sections perhaps two or three times, I have found no animals or any sign of them.

\$\$ Again, not a promise that there will be no traffic to worry about. Just a personal judgement of conditions as I have found them.

**STILES:** There are currently no stiles on this walk.