



## THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

### Medieval churches and landmarks of Exeter

- Start point: St Martin's Church Cathedral Close, Exeter, EX1
- Finish point: as above
- Route type: Circular
- Distance: 2km/1.25 miles
- Route difficulty: Easy (with one steep ascent)

Follow this gentle guided walk around Exeter's historic centre to explore some of the city's best medieval churches and landmarks.



#### Walk instructions

1. St Martin's Church in Cathedral Yard was consecrated in the same year as the Cathedral – 1065, making it a Saxon church. It was once one of six churches clustered in the cathedral's shadow and its tiny parish - smaller than the size of a football pitch - served the workers and traders who crowded into the three and four-storey houses in the surrounding streets. Today It is the most important and complete church in the centre of Exeter, having escaped Victorian refurnishing and Second World War bombing. Take time to enjoy the splendid carved wall monuments inside.
2. On exiting St Martin's Church turn to your right and take the lane on your right to walk along the side of the church. This is Catherine Street. Shortly you will come to the ruins of St Catherine's Chapel and almshouse, founded in 1457 to house thirteen poor men. The buildings were destroyed in a bombing raid in 1942.
3. Immediately after St Catherine's Chapel turn left, walk down the lane and under the 'bow' of St Stephen's and turn left again. You will be outside the entrance to St Stephen's Church – pop inside for information on the history of the church.
4. On exiting, St Stephen's Church turn left and walk down the High St. Opposite Santander bank turn right to enter the Guildhall Shopping Centre. In this unlikely spot you will find tiny St Pancras' Church, a 13<sup>th</sup>-century church that marks the spot of the earliest Christian site in Exeter. Once you've looked around, exit the shopping centre back onto High St and turn right.
5. Follow the High St as it turns into Fore St. Where the two merge you will find St Olave's, an 11<sup>th</sup>-century church reputed to have been founded by Gytha, mother of King Harold.
6. From St Olave's continue to the bottom of Fore St and turn left onto West St. Continue a short distance until you come to the 'House that Moved' and St Mary Steps Church on your left – both heritage gems of Exeter.

7. From St Mary's take the steps on Stepcote Hill, which was the main route from the river to the city from Roman times up until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is the hard bit! Stop and rest as needed!
8. From Stepcote Hill merge onto Smythen St. At the top of Smythen St turn right onto Market St. Follow the street around and then turn left onto South St and take the first right into Bear St. This is the location of one of seven medieval gates around Cathedral Yard. From Bear St right left into Deanery Lane to re-enter Cathedral Yard and return to the start pint.

Route map

