

East Hanningfield to Margaretting

CCA 4

Start	Main Road at school, East Hanningfield — CM3 8AE
Finish	Red Lion, Margaretting — CM4 0EG
Distance	14.72km
Duration	3 hours 07 minutes
Ascent	126m
Access	Bus at start and end of section, and at Stock <i>en route</i> .
Facilities	Shop at start of section; pubs at West Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting.

4.1	East Hanningfield	0m
4.2	W to shop; L to end of field; R, then bear R, to cross fb; ahead to Back Lane.	710m
4.3	L/R; path to Southend Rd; L/R to A130; L; fb over road.	1930m
4.4	L; L; R on path beneath power lines to Link House Fm on L	1160m
4.5	L at fieldhead; R; cross fm rd; path ahead to rd; R to inn.	1590m
4.6	SW on Lower Stock Rd; L on Pynning's Farm Rd; at end of houses, R; R edge of field; L at fieldhead; descend to Seaman's Lane.	1240m
4.7	R on Seaman's Lane; R on Downham Rd to Lavender Cottage.	1910m
4.8	L on path next to cottage; L onto Mill Lane at rec gd; pass windmill; just before T-jct, R on green path; join Common Lane to Stock at Baker's Arms.	1380m
4.9	R on Stock Rd; L on Crondon Park Lane; before brick house on R, L on path, passing golf course, to Swan Lane.	1390m
4.10	L; R on drive; before Hall gates, R into field; out L by bottom L corner; R at crosspath; on to road; after 80m, L on path in field; through gap; bear R; descend with hedge on R to path jct at Margaretting Tye.	1540m
4.11	L with stream on R; L into huge field; keep to riverside to fb on R; cross; ahead; pass beneath rly; ahead to rd; L to Red Lion.	1870m



*West of East Hanningfield,
the path is hindered by an
insufficient headland*

4.1 This section starts in East Hanningfield, at the road access to the school and the shop, opposite the southbound bus stop, and finishes at the Red Lion pub, on the main road in Margaretting. The route is mainly on field paths and enclosed tracks.

This stop is on the route of the two-hourly minibus service (which operates six days a week) between Chelmsford, Rayleigh and Southend.

This bus stop is called “Three Horseshoes” in the timetable and on the sign: that was the name of the pub which has become the Italian restaurant, though the driver affects not to know of the pub-based stop name. He also affects not to know of the stop at Hillview Cottages, and will surely deny knowledge of the Windmill stop (passed on the way through the village), since the Windmill pub has become a bistro. Perhaps the bus company might suggest the pleasures of retirement to him: he certainly qualifies.

As well as the two restaurants, the village shop may offer sustenance.

4.2 Start off down the road off The Tye which leads past the school to the village shop. Turn left in front of the shop and follow the path to the end of the field. Do not exit into the housing estate, but turn right on the tarmac path. Where the tarmac gives out, bear slightly right across the grass, making for a footbridge (for which you can see the metal railing) ahead. Cross the footbridge and take the path, with the hedge on your left, to Back Lane.

4.3 Turn left onto Back Lane, then immediately right to follow a path along the left-hand side of a field. After 350m, the path dips half-left, then continues generally westwards with the hedge on the right. Pass Hill Farm on the left, and continue to Southend Road.

Turn left onto Southend Road, then right to reach the fence bordering the busy A130. Turn left to ascend to the footbridge.

The bridge is named after St Peter’s Way, but the council seem to have run out of apostrophes in their sign-lettering set.

4.4 On descending from the bridge, turn left to reach a track. Turn left along the track, then right to continue on your south-of-westward way. Pass beneath power lines and continue to the fieldhead, where turn left. Just before the corner of the field, turn right to pass through the gap into the next field. Follow the



*St Peter's Way Footbridge
crosses the busy A130*

left-hand edge of the field, passing under more power lines as you do so.

4.5 Pass the buildings of Link House Farm (over to your left). After passing a stand of trees on your left, the path becomes an enclosed track.

Continue ahead for 900m to reach the access road for Helmons Farm, with the farm on your right. Cross the access road, and take the path opposite. This leads, through two left turns and a right turn, out onto the road at the east end of West Hanningfield.

Turn right along the road, ignoring the turn for the reservoir, to reach the Three Compasses Inn.

Apart from the pub, West Hanningfield has no facilities.

4.6 Take Lower Stock Road from the Three Compasses, and bear left onto Pynning's Farm Lane. At the end of the few houses, turn right to join a path which keeps to the right-hand side of an immense field. At the fieldhead, turn left with the path: this descends to Seaman's Lane, now a mud-covered track.

Seaman's Lane used to connect Stock with South Hanningfield, but in 1957, the connection was severed by the creation of Hanningfield Reservoir. The reservoir area is now a notable wildlife site.

4.7 Turn right onto Seaman's Lane, and continue to its end at Downham Road. Turn right on Downham Road (beware: there is no footway) and follow it almost as far as Lavender Cottage on the left.

4.8 Just before Lavender Cottage, take a path on the left. This eventually gives out onto Stock recreation ground. Cross the football pitch (or go round, obviously, if there is a match being played) to exit the ground by a gate.

Turn left onto Mill Lane: soon, you will come to Stock Tower Mill, which is occasionally open for viewing. Follow Mill Lane almost



Stock Tower Mill

to its end, and take a green path on the right. This leads past the dead end of a street and into an enclosed path: at the other end of the path, the route continues ahead on Common Road to its conclusion at High Street, with the Baker's Arms on your left.

The commercial centre of Stock, with shops, a café, and other pubs, is off to the left, and there are also bus stops for the frequent services linking Chelmsford, Billericay, Basildon, and Lakeside shopping mall. If all you need is the bus out, turn right at the Baker's Arms to the next bus stop (Crondon Park Lane).

4.9 From the Baker's Arms, set off to the north-east (with the pub behind you) to the edge of the town. At the pair of bus stops, turn left onto Crondon Park Lane, and follow it through its industrial environs and on, with woodland on your left, to approach a brick house on the right. Just before you reach the house, turn

left onto a path. Follow this path until, with a golf course on your right, you come out onto Swan Lane.

4.10 Double back along Swan Lane, and take the driveway of Fristling Hall on your right. Just before you reach the Hall gates, go through the hedge on the right into a churned-up field, and make your way to the bottom left-hand corner. Pass left through into a long strip of land: a sort of path makes its presence visible on the left-hand side of the strip. At the far end, turn right onto a track which leads up to a road (Swan Lane again, actually).

Take the road ahead for 80m, then turn left to pick up a path on the right-hand side of a field. Go through a gap ahead, and bear right to follow the right-hand side of the field to a path junction at the bottom.

The hamlet of Margaretting Tye is just off to the right.

4.11 Turn left at the bottom of the field, then turn left again into a massive field, which

View from the Bridge



may contain scores of cattle. Footpath pedants will strike across the field in a straight line, while the pragmatists will keep closer to the river, especially if there is a sentry beast foghorneing its disapproval of your presence.

You will reach a narrow footbridge and, hoping that the steps and narrowness makes it impassable by cattle, cross over to the other side of the River Wid.

From the end of the bridge, follow the path with a side-stream on your left to the railway embankment.

Double back down some Victorian-era steps to pass beneath the railway in a tunnel which will be a pain (possibly literally as well as figuratively) for the taller 50% (or more) of the population, and come out, ideally with your scalp intact. Climb the steps and descend again to pick up a path, the stream still on your left. In time, you will see the gable-end of business premises ahead.

Make for that building to emerge onto the main road at the west end of the village of Margaretting. Turn left along the road, passing the school on the right, to reach the Red Lion Inn at the bottom of the hill.

The pub offers food and drink during normal hours.

There is a pair of bus stops on the half-hourly service (two-hourly on Sundays) between Brentwood and Chelmsford. The link to Chelmsford from the bus stop on the same side of the road as the pub is likely to be the more useful option: it is timetabled to take 20 minutes, but that does not factor in delays due to Chelmsford's endemic traffic jams. From the other bus stop, it is only five or six minutes to the Almshouses stop in Ingatestone (one stop beyond Market Place), from which you should allow ten minutes to reach the station, but trains are less frequent there than at Chelmsford. Check the timetables.



Tunnel under the railway



Red Lion Inn, Margaretting