

HUNGATE STAINED GLASS TRAILS: NO.1

Stody • Bale • Field Dalling • Cley



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STODY, ST MARY. NR24 2ED.

TG 056 352. Key available close by.

A memorable situation: the church stands high, by Norfolk standards, dramatically above the valley to the east, with a pretty garden to the north.

Round tower. Early 14th-century chancel, later nave with ancient doors in the porch and on the tower stair. Exceptionally fine timber roof with bosses and with heraldic shields or angels at the corbels from which the arches of the roof spring, all of it unexpectedly grand for what now seems such a remote building, but reflecting earlier prosperity. Old bench ends, 13th-century font of Purbeck marble, beautifully proportioned transepts, a damaged wall painting of S Christopher opposite the main door as they so often are to protect the traveller.

The church is full of light, clearly loved, well and unfussily cared for: a model.



The Glass

Beautiful 15th-century glass in the tracery lights of three windows can be associated with a Ralph Lampet, who held various civic offices in Great Yarmouth, and his wife Margaret, through whom he had acquired the patronage of the church by 1440. The glass dates from c.1440-50.

The more easterly north window has a Coronation of the Virgin flanked by six Apostles, each one readily identifiable by the attribute he carries. The Apostles stand on chequered pavements and are backed by rich, damasked hangings. The main lights below originally had figures of S Nicholas, to whom Yarmouth Priory was dedicated, and an archbishop saint, perhaps Thomas Becket.

In the more western window is an alternating series of unnamed Kings – although S Edmund is recognisable by his arrow - and Old Testament Patriarchs. The chequered floors and damask hangings are the same as those in the adjacent window. In the main lights were S Christopher and a female donor with a scroll over her head asking for prayers from S George.

The glass was made by the workshop of John Wighton of Norwich, which made much of the glass in Norwich, S Peter Mancroft, where some of the same designs were used.

In the east window of the south transept are four fragmentary figures of female saints: Ss Margaret, Mary Magdalen, Helen, and Catherine. These may have been given by Margaret Lampet.

Opposite:
Stained glass at Stody church

**BALE, ALL SAINTS. NR21 0QZ.
TG 011 367. Normally open.**

Another church that is bathed in light, with an unusually broad east window and pairs of windows on each side of the chancel set to lighten the part that the east window could not illuminate.

Until it became too dangerous in the 19th century, there was a huge oak west of the church. It was replaced with a delightful grove of ilexes, now in the care of the National Trust. The west wall of the tower is instructive: the west window a pretty example of the Decorated period, the niche below it with an ogee arch, a style sadly rare, its development perhaps curtailed by the Black Death.

"A loved church, beautifully cared for"

Inside, through an old door, there are a faint S Christopher mural, an adaptable royal arms apparently Stuart but dated 1698 and with a G for King George, a 1470 font, numerous large consecration crosses, an old timber roof to the chancel, an elegant piscina in its south-west corner and a benefaction board recording the gift of blankets to clothe the poor of Bale.



The Glass

The surviving glass seems to reflect a particular devotion to the Annunciation here. Leaded into the south-east nave window there are many representations of this event taken from tracery lights (two Gabriels and four Marys are to be seen), and at least one main-light depiction, which is now the main feature of the glazing.

Feathered angels, some playing musical instruments, account for much of the other glass, but there is also part of a main-light figure of an Apostle bearing a Creed scroll, and a panel of fragments (bottom centre) including part of an abbeess, a figure of Christ crucified from a Trinity representation, *Edwardi*, probably the name of a saint or donor, and pieces of early 14th-century oak-leaf and acorn pattern work called *grisaille*, the oldest glass in the window. All the other glass mentioned so far dates from c.1460-70.

The central pair of figures dates from c.1360-80 and represents Prophets from a series holding messianic texts, almost certainly from the chancel windows. The figures stand in canopy work of the same date. A small bust of the risen Christ, of similar date, has been leaded into this panel.

Many of the pieces here represent the remains of the original borders of rod-and-leaf pattern and backgrounds of *rose-en-soleil* quarries. Notice the use of the same cartoon (full-size pattern) for some of the Annunciation panels and the abrasion of the pattern on the red glass of the large Virgin Mary's mantle to show clear glass beneath, red glass being made of two layers, one of ruby, the other of clear glass.

Opposite:
Stained glass at Bale church

MAP OF THE TRAIL

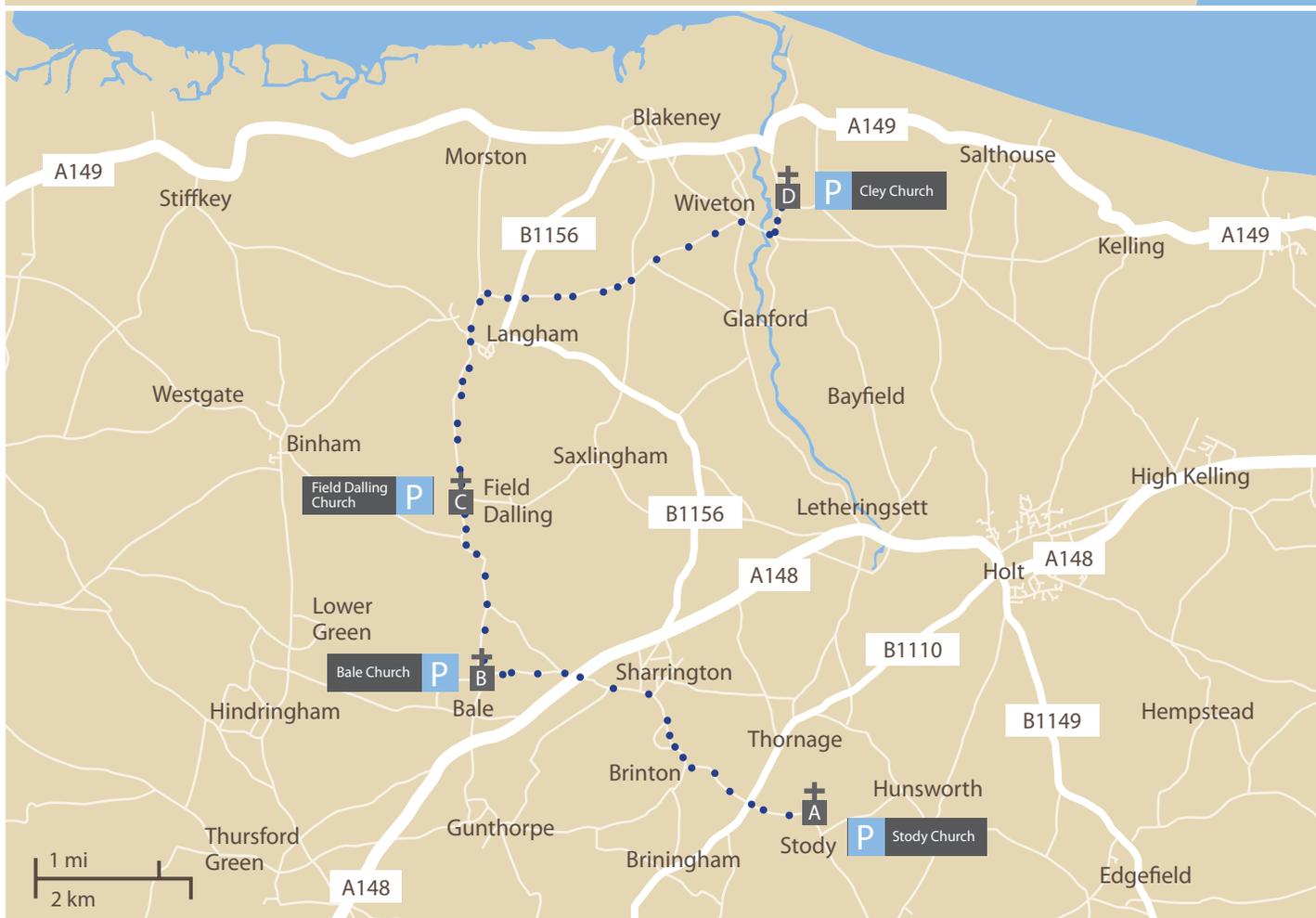
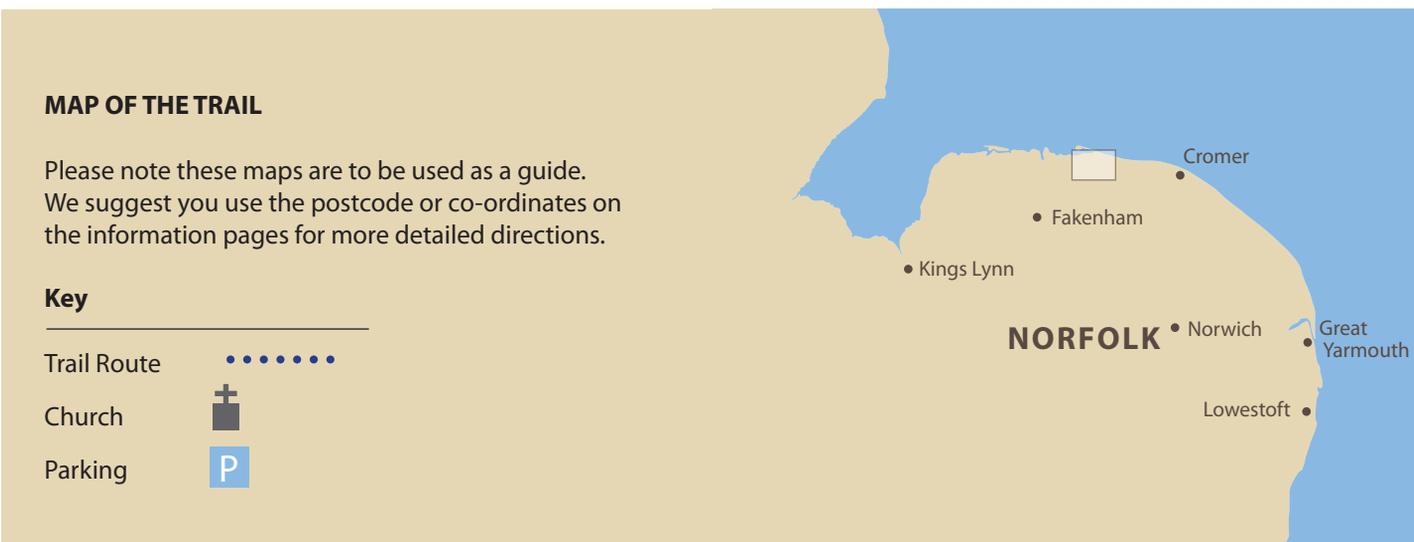
Please note these maps are to be used as a guide.
We suggest you use the postcode or co-ordinates on the information pages for more detailed directions.

Key

Trail Route 

Church 

Parking 



**FIELD DALLING, ST ANDREW. NR25 7LG.
TG 005 390. Normally open.**

A handsome well-cared for church with that rarity, an uncluttered base of the tower.

Tower, most of it, and chancel late 14th-century, the latter with lovely tracery in the windows. The arcade and big nave windows date from a good century later, for the nave roof with its Tudor roses must be after 1485. More old woodwork in the pews which have medieval poppyheads and backs to the benches, with good Victorian copies where needed. A few 18th-century box pews in the north aisle, all in all a kind of history of pewing. Font similar to Bale's with Instruments of the Passion. Unusual Royal Arms with a lozenge shape.



The Glass

Most of the glass here is in the south nave windows, whose traceries contain the remains of three different series of figures of c.1450-70.

The easternmost has an incomplete set of female saints as you will see at Cley. The first figure is missing and the second is unidentifiable. The remaining survivors are Ss Mary Magdalen with pot of ointment, Catherine with wheel, Agnes with lamb and Cecilia with circlet of flowers. The next window held eight of the twelve Apostles, of which we now recognize Ss Andrew, Thomas, Jude, Philip, Bartholomew and Paul, all with their normal emblems or attributes. It is unfortunate that the third window retains the least of its original glazing, as its subject matter is rather more unusual. It seems to have had a set of sainted ecclesiastics, the first of which we see now is an abbess with a crozier, probably S Etheldreda of Ely; next, after a lost figure, is possibly S Leger, and the last two are S Giles and very likely S Sylvester. The tracery of the middle window of the north aisle contains very restored and possibly rather earlier glass, being the remnants of two sets of figures which often appear together in late medieval art, the Apostles with Creed scrolls and the Prophets with messianic texts.

*“The third window subject matter
is rather more unusual”*

It is interesting to note and contrast the two radically different types of restoration represented here: the ‘purist’ one on the south, with clear glass where old pieces are missing, and the attempt on the north side at a complete restoration, with the missing sections repainted.

Opposite:
Stained glass at Field Dalling church

**CLEY, ST MARGARET. NR25 7TT.
TG 048 432. Normally open.**

Cley was once an important port and the church looks out over what was its inland end. It is one of Norfolk's larger churches, but quite unlike all the others in its informality and exuberance.

The stonework of its ruined south transept and north porch has, Pevsner suggests, almost a Spanish look – quite possibly one of the church's benefactors fought in Spain during the late 14th century with John of Gaunt.

Look everywhere at the detail: the carvings on and in the south porch, the unusual clerestory windows which fill the interior with light, the figures which, on both sides, support the arches of the nave, some seeming to bow under the weight.

*“The remarkable font has on its sides
images of the seven sacraments”*

Look too at the carved bench ends and the misericords under the seats of the stalls in the chancel. The best of the brasses is that of John Symonds, his wife and all their children awaiting the Last Judgment in their shrouds. The remarkable font has on its sides images of the seven sacraments. Don't miss the 1611 pulpit, the doors which seem to enclose the congregation in one huge box pew, and the lettering of the Commandment Boards, Creed and Lord's Prayer and of the handsome headstones in the churchyard.

Beside the road there is a welcoming pub to greet your return to earth.

The Glass

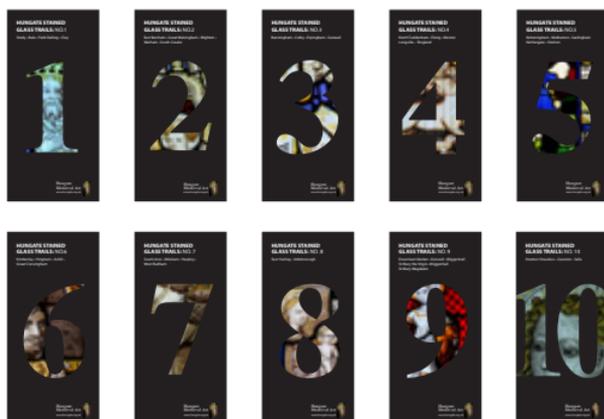
Apart from a few insignificant fragments arranged in a north chancel window and one or two pieces in the clerestory, the only old glass here is in the window to the left of the south door. The tracery contains the best preserved example of a type of group of female saints found in several Norfolk churches, mostly in the north of the county. Here are seen the following: Agatha; Sitha; a saint with a sword or stake based on the same cartoon as one at Wighton and possibly Anastasia; Petronilla; Barbara; Faith; Apollonia; Cecilia. It has been suggested that these sets may be based on the five female martyrs memorialized in the Canon of the Mass: Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia.

Medieval wills from Cley tell us that there was a guild of maidens in the church, which could explain the choice of overall subject. The style of the glass suggests a date of c.1450-60. The figure of S Apollonia is based on the same design, but reversed, as a figure of S Catherine at Norwich, S Peter Mancroft, by the workshop of John Wighton of Norwich, and it would seem that the same group of craftsmen was responsible for the Cley saints.



In spite of its deep, rich colours, beautiful draftsmanship and fascinating imagery, stained glass is one of the most under-rated artistic legacies of the medieval period. A distinctive style and quality of craftsmanship has led to stained glass made by Norwich workshops being displayed in museum collections across the world but, largely unknown to visitors, medieval glass remains in over 200 of the county's parish churches. This series aims to draw attention to some of these medieval treasures and encourage visitors to explore the beautiful churches where these windows are to be found.

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Hungate Medieval Art
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Opening hours

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Written and produced by Hungate Medieval Art with David King (UEA) as part of the Stained Glass Exhibition. Hungate Medieval Art promotes the medieval art and artefacts visible across the county of Norfolk. Photos with thanks to Mike Dixon and David King. Designed by The Click Design Consultants.

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