



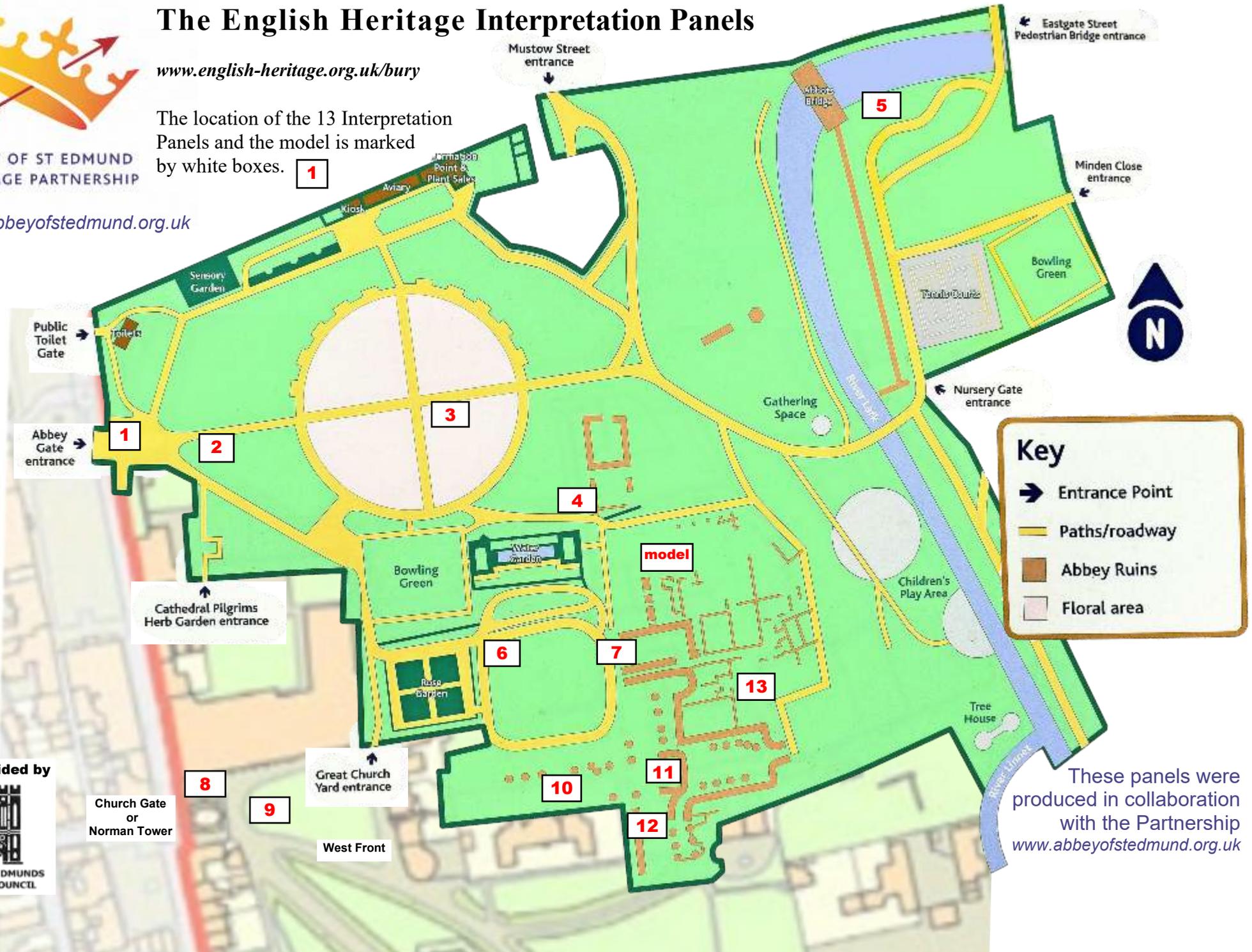
# The English Heritage Interpretation Panels

[www.english-heritage.org.uk/bury](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/bury)

The location of the 13 Interpretation Panels and the model is marked by white boxes. **1**

ABBEY OF ST EDMUND  
HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP

[www.abbeyofstedmund.org.uk](http://www.abbeyofstedmund.org.uk)



**Key**

- Entrance Point
- Paths/roadway
- Abbey Ruins
- Floral area

Grant aided by



Church Gate or Norman Tower

Great Church Yard entrance

West Front

These panels were produced in collaboration with the Partnership [www.abbeyofstedmund.org.uk](http://www.abbeyofstedmund.org.uk)

*Please note that there is no specific order to view the panels, the numbers are just for this map and the full titles of the panels are listed below:*

- 1** **The Abbey Gate:**  
The Abbey of St Edmund was one of the largest and most powerful abbeys in the country. This imposing yet beautiful gateway was the impressive main entrance to the abbey's Great Court.
- 2** **The Abbey of St Edmund:**  
Today, it mostly lies in ruins. The abbey was a large community, with clear roles to make sure everything ran smoothly – just like any organisation.
- 3** **The Great Court:**  
In the Middle Ages, this area was a huge open courtyard with access to all of the working areas of the abbey. People, horses and carts would have been coming and going all day.
- 4** **The Abbot's Palace:**  
The abbot was a powerful and influential man. To reflect his importance he had a large and luxurious residence, and this ruined building known as the Queen's Chamber is all that remains.
- 5** **The Abbey Precinct and Beyond:**  
This bridge carries the abbey's precinct wall across the river Lark. The Lark and Linnet rivers were important parts of the abbey complex, providing fresh water and taking waste away.
- 6** **The Cloister:**  
This large, square area was the cloister, the heart of the main buildings. From here the monks could access everything they needed for their daily lives and stay separate from the outside world.
- 7** **The Chapter House:**  
As the abbey grew, its organisation became more elaborate. The abbot was in charge, with support from the prior and sub-prior, and the chapter house was the centre of their management. The monks' communal lives were highly regulated by the Rule of St Benedict.
- 8** **The Church Gate:**  
This gateway led directly to the Abbey Church. The abbey's many visitors would all pass through here, from kings and queens to humble pilgrims in search of a miracle.
- 9** **The West Front:**  
The magnificent west front provided the first impression of the Abbey Church to its many visitors. Its unusually wide design and looming central tower would have been an imposing sight.
- 10** **The Development of the Abbey Church:**  
The Abbey was larger than most cathedrals and roughly twice the size of St Edmundsbury Cathedral. This area of the church was the nave – an impressive space that led to the shrine of St Edmund.
- 11** **The Eastern End:**  
The crypt, now exposed, was originally a low, dark, vaulted interior. This eastern end of the Abbey Church was the oldest part built around 1080–95 during the rule of Abbot Baldwin.
- 12** **The Heart of the Church:**  
The heart of any church was the choir – the space where the monks sat. At Bury, the choir occupied the area below the central tower and into the nave to the left. Monks gathered here eight times every day.
- 13** **Cnut's Church and its Successor:**  
St Edmund's body was moved to Bury St Edmunds. A large wooden church was built here. In 1020, Cnut, the Danish king of England, approved a decision to turn the church into a Benedictine monastery.
- model** **The Abbey Model:**  
The model, and panels around it, help to show what the Abbey of St Edmund was once like.