



The Kent Coast

Coastal Access Report

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4.6 Canterbury's Coast

4.6.1 Description

4.6.1.1 Canterbury's coast starts at TR056648 on Graveney Marshes just to the west of The Sportsman at Seasalter. It extends for 21 km to TR245294 the Twelve Foot Dyke which is to the east of Reculver.

4.6.1.2 Approximately 13 km is on PRoWs with the majority of the remainder having defacto access. There are two stretches of beach that claim to be private.

The majority of the route is along the Saxon Shore Way.

4.6.1.3 The view to seaward is out over the Thames estuary. The scenery at the start and finish is flat over reclaimed salt marsh. Seasalter is a holiday area. There are grass slopes before the seaside town of Whitstable. Whitstable has a working harbour. There are more slopes between Whitstable and Hampton with a flat open area and holiday parks at Swalecliffe. Herne Bay is another seaside town with grass slopes before low cliffs at Reculver.

4.6.1.4 The start of the route is along a sea defence bank with a sea wall. From Seasalter it is promenade almost all the way to Bishopstone. There is a short stretch of compacted shingle beach to the west of Whitstable and grass paths at Swalecliffe.

From Bishopstone to Reculver there is a grass cliff top path. Reculver to Twelve Foot Dyke is along the sea defence bank which is surfaced.

4.6.1.5 The route includes a section of the South Swale Nature Reserve and the Reculver Country Park.

4.6.2 The Route

4.6.2.1 Graveney Marshes to Swalecliffe



The path starts at TR 056648 just to the west of The Sportman public house. This is at the eastern end of the South Swale Nature Reserve. The path is on the landward side of the sea wall on a raised bank and is grass and about 3m wide.



At TR 057648 there is a gate leading to the beach which is compacted shell and shingle leading to a small estate of beach huts and chalets. The Saxon Shore Way continues diagonally inland on top of the bank and passes behind the estate.

There are the remains of a fence across the beach at TR060648, the western limit of the estate



It is possible to walk along the beach. There is a more substantial post and sheep wire fence at TR062648 and a sign "Private Beach", the eastern limit of the estate.

A little further on is the eastern limit of the South Swale Nature Reserve.

At the eastern end of the estate there is a path leading back up onto the sea defence wall. The path along the top of the bank is 2-3 m wide for approximately 1.2km where it narrows to join the road.



The Saxon Shore Way continues along the road. There are steps over the wall at TR074645 and it is an easy walk along the shingle beach in front of the chalet/bungalow gardens.



The Saxon Shore Way is rejoined at TR082651.

This is the start of a private estate.



The SSW follows along the top of the grassy slope through the estate. There is a 3m wide promenade at the bottom of the slope.



There is a sign claiming the promenade is for maintenance purposes only and that the beach is private.



At the end of the promenade there is an easy step down on to a new shingle beach with low breakwaters.



This leads to a narrow promenade before it joins the PRow at TR097656. This footpath is a 2-3m wide promenade between two rows of beach huts.



At TR100659 the promenade ends but the footpath continues towards the road. It is a short detour along the beach of compacted shingle around the holiday park to rejoin the promenade which is about 2m wide at this point.



The promenade continues to Whitstable harbour at TR107670. It narrows in places to about 1.5m but it is level with the beach of compacted shingle. There is a short stretch of wooden boards around the Oyster Stores.



The SSW diverts inland at TR104665 and follows the road around the harbour to rejoin the coast at TR112672. There is no problem with continuing along the South Quay of the harbour.



The East Quay is fenced off as there is a tarmac plant and aggregate storage. However, a short way on there is a road with pavement leading to the beach and promenade at TR109671.



It is a short walk back to the west to the harbour arm.

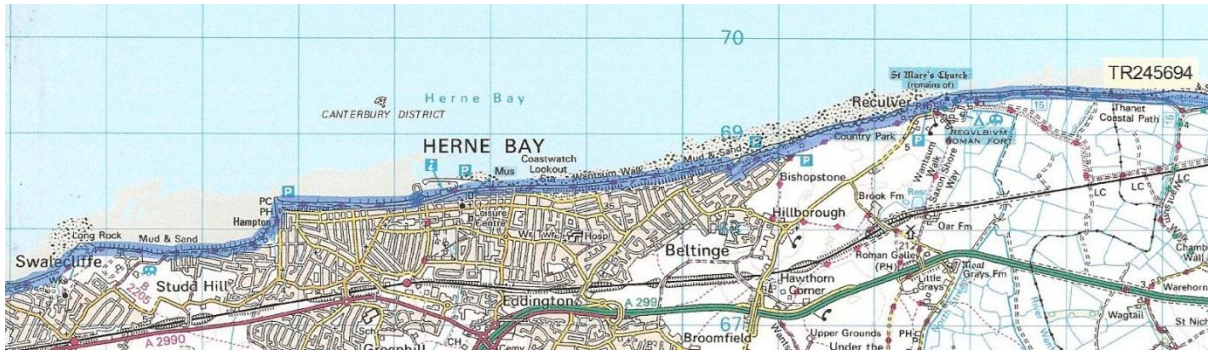
The promenade here is 3m widening to 4m and continues along the bottom of Tankerton Slopes to Long Rock at Swalecliffe TR135675.



Long Rock is a shingle promontory covered in grass with a number of paths across it. It is bisected by the Swalecliffe Brook which is crossed by footbridge.



4.6.2.2 Swalecliffe to Twelve Foot Dyke



At Swalecliffe TR139678 a 6m wide promenade starts and continues to Hampton Pier where it turns left and follows the road.



It narrows to about 1.5m before a short flight of steps up to the seafront road.

There is a wide pavement/promenade along Herne Bay seafront all the way to Bishopstone at TR207687.



At Hampton the path along the bottom of the slopes behind beach huts.





The Saxon Shore Way crosses a bridge, goes up steps and along a 1.5m concrete path to the Reculver Country Park.



The coast here becomes low cliff. It is possible to continue along the foot of the cliff except at high spring tide and there are warnings and evidence of cliff falls.



There is a cliff top path parallel to the Saxon Shore Way to Reculver.



The path goes behind the Towers and rejoins a 3m wide promenade to the eastern limit of the Canterbury coast at the Twelve Foot Dyke TR245694



4.6.3 Access Issues

4.6.3.1 The Spotsman Beach TR060648 to TR062648 0.2 km

There are signs and a fence claiming the beach is private. The Saxon Shore Way currently follows the sea defence bank behind this small estate of huts and chalets. There are no gardens or fences between the properties. The solution would be to designate the area between the Saxon Shore Way and high water mark as Access Land.

4.6.3.2 Faversham Road TR0745645 to TR082651 0.7 km

The Saxon Shore Way currently follows the road which does not have a pavement. There is a firm shingle beach between the chalet/bungalow gardens and high water mark. There is no indication that the beach is private.

4.6.3.3 Preston Parade TR082651 to TR091653 0.9 km

Although the Saxon Shore Way goes through the private estate, there are signs indicating the beach is private. Again, the solution would be to designate the land between the Saxon Shore Way and high water mark as Access Land.

4.6.3.4 Beach below Joy Lane TR091653 to TR097657 0.4 km

This beach is reasonably new in that new breakwaters have been put in and additional shingle added. This provides a good walking surface albeit that there are low breakwaters. There is no indication that the beach is private.