



# **The Kent Coast**

## **Coastal Access Report**

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## **4.7 Dover's Coast**

### **4.7.1 Description**

**4.7.1.1** Dover's coast starts at TR341622 at the mouth of the river Stour at Pegwell Bay. It extends for 36 km to The Warren at TR243371 just to the east of Folkestone.

**4.7.1.2** Approximately 24 km is on PRowS, 6km on permissive paths and 6 km on cycle routes.

Sections of the Stour Valley Walk, White Cliffs Country Trail, North Downs Way and Saxon Shore Way are included.

**4.7.1.3** The scenery is initially flat with reclaimed sand dunes and salt marsh before the seaside town of Deal and village of Kingsdown. From here the iconic White Cliffs start and the route is along the cliff top to the busy ferry/cruise ship port of Dover. Past Dover to the Warren is initially along the top and then along the bottom of the cliffs.

**4.7.1.4** From the start the route is a broad grass path with golf courses on the landward side. There is a stretch of road at the Sandwich Bay Estate before a sea defence bank to Sandown. It is then promenade, road and path to Kingsdown. Past Kingsdown the route ascends to the cliff top descending briefly at St Margaret's Bay then continues back along the cliff to Dover. There is a promenade around Dover Harbour, then roads and a section of shingle beach before regaining the cliff top again at Shakespeare Cliff. There are steps down the cliff to The Warren where there is a concrete apron.

**4.7.1.5** The route takes in part of the Kent Wildlife Trust's Sandwich & Pegwell Bay NNRA. There are two coastal parks: Gateway to the White Cliffs and Shakespeare Cliff. There are sections of Open Access Land.

## 4.7.2 The Route

### 4.7.2.1 Pegwell Bay to Deal



Dover's coast starts at the mouth of the Stour at TR341622. However, there is no crossing at this point and there is no option but to follow the bank of the river as closely as possible to the bridge at Sandwich. It is a very winding river at this point and it is not possible to follow its banks because they are industrialised. The A256 is a busy dual carriageway and the next 5k along this road and through the Pfizers complex is far from pleasant.

There are a couple of access roads to the river but they are private with security.



Pfizers have landscaped the Black Sand Point Landfill Site at TR334607 and there may be some intention of open it up which could give limited access to the river bank? At TR334603 there is a short stretch of cycle/footpath which is close to the river. However the river is obscured by pipes.



The route then follows a B road through the Pzifers site before passing Stonar and an industrial estate.



It crosses the bridge at TR332582 in Sandw ich



The route follows the quay along the west bank of the river.



It goes through gardens before crossing a bridge over a small tributary. It bears left along the top of a raised grass bank



This leads to a road past New Downs Farm.



The path goes through a kissing gate at TR348594 and crosses the Prince's Golf Course.



It is poorly signposted but leads to another kissing gate at TR355599 where it joins the Stour Valley Walk.



It is possible to follow the walk back north for 3K to the mouth of the Stour and the start of Dover's coast.



It is a broad grass path to start but barely discernible at the end.



There is a Prince's Golf Club Sign at TR352616 which implies limited access.



There is a No Entry sign on the beach at TR346625 looking back towards Pegwell Bay..



Returning to the kissing gate at TR355599 and walking towards Deal the path is broad and grassy.



At TR359586 the Saxon Shore Way/White Cliffs Country Trail becomes a single track road but there are still paths along the grass.



At TR357591 there are the remains of a fence and anti tank obstacles before a car park.



TR366571 is the start of the private Sandwich Bay Estate.



The PRoW deviates inland at this point to rejoin the coast 500m further on. However, there is no deterrent to continuing along the coastal path.



There is a broad road along the front to the far end where the Sailing Club has a gate



There is then a wide path along the top of the sea defence bank all the way to Sandown Castle.



It becomes one level narrowing in places and broadening in others and goes all the way to Deal.



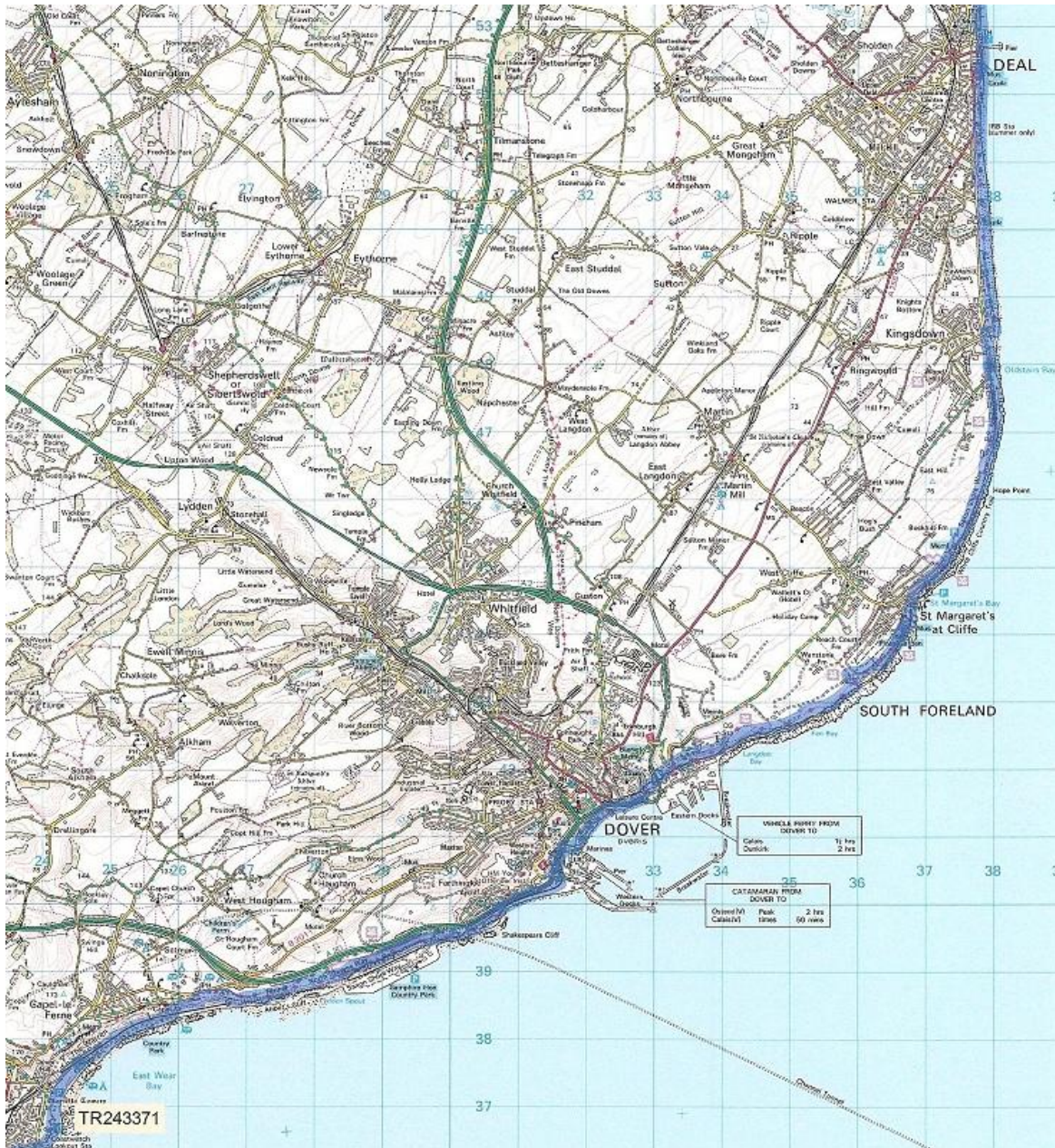
Here there are steps down to a 3m wide concrete promenade on two levels on the seaward side of the sea wall.



There is a short stretch only 1m wide at The Royal Hotel at TR378529.



### 4.7.2.2 Deal to The Warren



The promenade/pavement goes past Deal Pier



The route follows the seafront road to Deal Castle where it becomes a footpath/cycle way to Walmer.



The shingle beach is very broad and the path some way back from the sea.

At the end of Wellington Parade, Kingsdown, TR380485 it becomes a footpath only about 2m wide.



At TR380485 the path turns inland to follow the road,



For a short distance, it does not have a pavement.



It is possible to avoid the road by walking across the shingle beach.



How ever it is a dead end at TR380472.



At TR380478 the path goes up steps to the cliff top.



Although there are keep out signs all along the fence, one gate was unlocked and there was a hole in the fence at the far end.

Returning to the steps, at the top is Access Land and the path follows the cliff though the sea view is blocked by shrubs in places.

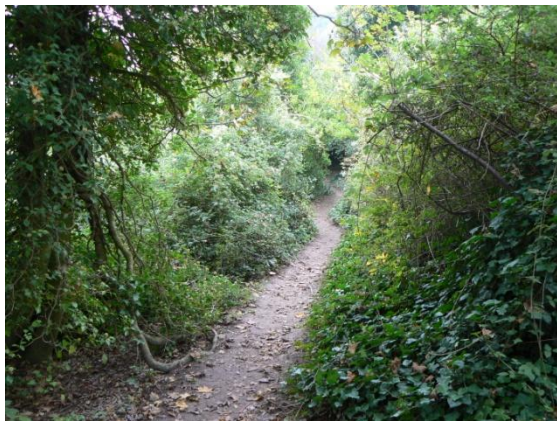
There is a path along the bottom of the cliff with a disused MoD rifle range, Kingsdown Butts, which is fenced on the left.



The path goes around a memorial.



It then descends towards St Margaret's. It is quite steep and wooded.



At TR369446 there is a steep zigzag of steps down to the bottom of the cliff and car park.



The Saxon Shore Way then follows a road without a pavement winding back up the cliff.



It is possible to walk a bit further around the bay and up steep steps which are in poor condition beside a pill box.



Arriving back at the top of the cliff, there is an open area of Access Land at TR367441.



This comes to a narrow path leading back to the road.



After a short distance the path is blocked by trees



The Saxon Shore Way follows residential roads. There is no sea view on the way up as it is inland and there are houses

It diverts inland through a gate around three large private houses.



Some of this land is field rather than garden and it is not obvious why the path could not follow the cliff top with sea views for at least part of this length.

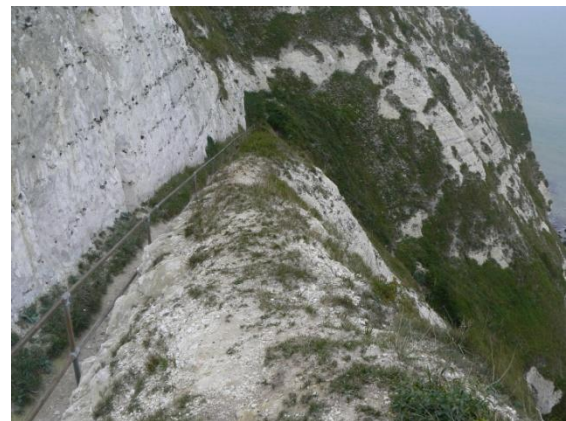
At the South Foreland Lighthouse the path follows the concrete wall before emerging to open cliff top.



There has been major subsidence of the chalk cliff at Fan point and Langdon Hole and the Saxon Shore Way/White Cliffs Trail keeps to the upper level with Access Land on the seaward side. There are a number of other paths across the lower levels.



At TR345425 there are very steep steps down to the beach.



At TR337421 the path divides: the lower one comes to a dead end.





The higher one becomes surfaced and leads to steps down and under the A2 to Dover's East Cliff.



The roads to the Eastern Docks are extremely busy and there is no crossing to the harbour seafront until TR326415.



There is then a very wide promenade with cycle track around the harbour





At the Prince of Wales Pier where there is a roundabout. The route crosses the bridge over the marina



Access to the beach to the west of the harbour is at TR319403



It then turns left along the A20.



Here there is a concrete road/path.



At the next roundabout it goes left along the road towards the Cruise Terminal.



How ever it runs out and there is no option but to w alk over soft shingle



This leads to steps and a footbridge over the railw ay and up the cliff at TR309400.



This is the North Downs Way. There is a 1m wide fenced concrete path up before emerging on to Access Land at Shakespear Cliff.



The path follows the cliff top which is fenced off in some places with Samphire Hoe below to seaward and the A20 inland.



The path becomes metalled at TR272386 for a short distance



Near the bottom is a path and footbridge over the railway.

Further on there is a handrail where it is close to the cliff edge.



At TR269386 there is a footpath off the Saxon Shore Way to the left with an old signpost to The Warren



The steps are not in very good condition. At the bottom is a broad concrete sea defence apron leading towards Folkestone.

The footpath leads to steep steps down the cliff.



The sea defences stop at TR243371 which is about the limit of Dover's coast at The Warren

### 4.7.3 Access Issues

#### 4.7.3.1 Mouth of the River Stour TR341622 0.1 km

The mouth of the Stour is only about 100m wide but there is no crossing. Currently the only option is to follow the road from the Stonelees Nature Reserve to the road bridge at Sandwich, some 5 km inland, and then back by PRowS to the coast at TR355560. It is then a 3 km walk back north along the coast to the mouth of the river. The river meanders considerably and it would be 7.5 km following the river bank.

The road to Sandwich is busy and it is not a pleasant walk. It is set some way back from the river bank which is heavily industrialised. It is a secure area and access to the river is not allowed. The Pzifers site is noticeably secure. There does appear to be a path along part of the bank and consideration should be given to reopening it.

The west bank of the river does not appear to be excepted land. Much of it is arable farmland and there is no obvious reason why there should not be a riverside path along at least part of it. There is some saltmarsh towards the mouth of the river. It is part of the Kent Wildlife Trust's Sandwich & Pegwell Bay NNRA.

The ideal solution would be a footbridge across the mouth of the river.

#### 4.7.3.2 Royal St George's Golf Course TR357591 to TR360587 0.5 km

For some reason the PRowS deviate inland significantly. There are no obstacles to continuing along the coast and it may well be defacto access. The position needs to be clarified.

#### 4.7.3.3 Kingsdown Butts TR380478 to TR380472 0.7 km

This is a disused MOD rifle range at the bottom of the cliff. There is a PRow along the landward side which comes to a dead end. The range is fenced with warning notices preventing access to the sea. One gate was unlocked and there was a hole in the fence at the end.

Consideration should be given to opening this area up as spreading room

#### 4.7.3.4 St Margarets at Cliffe TR368445 to TR367441 0.4 km

There is no option but to follow roads inland from the beach back up to the top of the cliff.

#### 4.7.3.4 South Foreland TR364435 to TR360432 0.5 km

This deviation away from the cliff top is around three houses with extensive grounds. Part of these grounds are fields and may not be excepted land.

**4.7.3.5 Gateway to the White Cliffs Coastal Park TR337421 to TR331419 0.6 km**

This is a relatively minor issue. There are a number of paths through the park and the lower one, nearest the sea, comes to a dead end. There is no indication of this. It would not be too difficult to have steps at the end up to the PRow,