



The Kent Coast

Coastal Access Report

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4.6 Thanet's Coast

4.6.1 Description

4.6.1.1 Thanet's coast starts at TR246694 the Twelve Foot Dyke on the Northern Sea Wall to the east of Reculver. It extends for 30km to TR341622 at Pegwell Bay.

4.6.1.2 It appears only about 5 km is on PRowS. The majority of the remainder seems to have de facto access.

Most of the route is along the Saxon Shore Way. This is shared with the Viking Coastal Trail/Thanet Coastal Path which is an almost continuous cycle route/footpath around this part of the coast.

4.6.1.3 The view to seaward at the start is the Thames Estuary and then the English Channel from the North Foreland onwards.

The scenery at the start is flat with views over reclaimed saltmarsh. Low chalk cliffs start at Minnis Bay and extend around the North Foreland to Pegwell Bay. The coast is rocky (chalk) with sandy beaches. Most of the coast is urban with Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate major holiday towns. There are small harbours at Margate and Broadstairs with a larger harbour and marina at Ramsgate. Here there is a ferry terminal.

4.6.1.4 The start of the walk is along the sea defence bank. From Minnis Bay it is more or less continuous promenade to Foreness Point where the route follows the cliff top path. It is then a mix of cliff top path and promenade to Pegwell Bay where the route is across the old hovercraft terminal to the Pegwell Bay Country Park. There are a couple of short sections of sandy beach. The route follows the road at Margate and Ramsgate.

4.6.1.5 The route takes in the Pegwell Bay Country Park, Stonelees Nature Reserve and part of the Kent Wildlife Trust's Sandwich and Pegwell Bay NNRA and Natural England's Thanet Coast SSSI.

4.6.2 The Route

4.6.2.1 Twelve Foot Dyke to Westgate



The path starts on the Northern Sea Wall at TR246694 which is on the Saxon Shore Way and also the start of the Viking Coastal Trail Cycle Path. It is a promenade about 4m wide on the landward side of the sea wall. Inland is reclaimed salt marsh.



It is continuous to Plum Pudding Island but narrows in places to 3m deviating slightly inland around a small lake/large pond at TR251694. There is a raised shingle bank here which is easily walkable.



There is another small lake/pond at TR265692.

At Plum Pudding Island TR274694 the SSW and Viking Trail continue along the top but there are steps down to a broad 8m wide promenade to Minnis Bay. There are beach huts on the prom which is now continuous.



At the western end of Minnis Bay the chalk cliffs of Thanet start.



The promenade continues along the bottom to Epple Bay TR306699 where there are steps up to the cliff top.



4.6.2.2 Westgate to Pegwell Bay



There is a road with pavement to Westgate Bay TR316700 where there are steps down to a 5m wide promenade.



The prom does go back to the east but is a dead end. At St Mildred's Bay there is a bridge over a slipway at TR328704.



At TR372714 the promenade ends and there is a short stretch of sandy beach before it is rejoined.



The promenade is continuous to Margate's main beach where it becomes the pavement of the A28.



At TR 383716 the promenade ends and there is a steep path to the top of the cliff by the pumping station.



At the far end there are steps up to a promenade which goes behind the new Turner Gallery and continues to Palm Bay.



There is a metalled path set back from the cliff edge to Botany Bay.



The path continues along the cliff top to the Captain Digby at Kingsgate Bay. The path narrows on the seaward side of the pub.



At Kingsgate Castle the route deviates inland and there is no alternative as the Castle, which is now private apartments, is built right up to the cliff edge.



It follows the road around private houses.



to rejoin the coast at Joss Bay where it leaves the road to follow the edge of a field which is close to the cliff top but fenced.



At TR401698 the Saxon Shore Way turns inland around the North Foreland Private Estate.



However the Viking Way cycle path appears to continue along the private road to TR400671 where it is gated off and there is no alternative but to deviate inland to North Foreland Road.



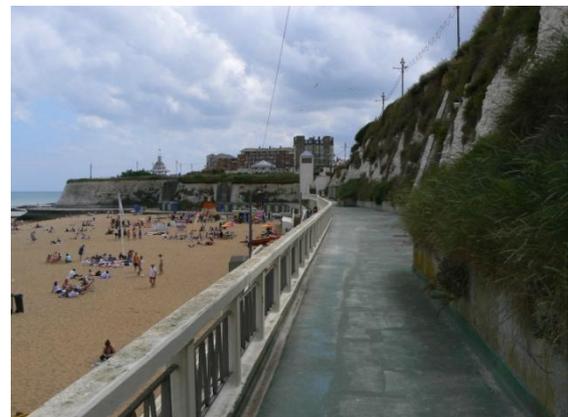
At TR398689 there is a metalled footpath with steps down to a 4m wide promenade. This deviation is around an estate of about four private houses with extensive gardens/ tennis courts/ swimming pools up to the cliff edge.



The 4m wide promenade is constricted in places by beach huts but continues to Viking Bay which is Broadstair's main beach.



The promenade joins the road but there is access across the sandy beach or via a boardwalk to steps to a raised promenade.



At the end of this short raised promenade there are steps down to a broad promenade



which continues to Dumpton Gap.



At Dumpton Gap there is a steep tarmac path to the top of the cliff. At the top there is a short stretch of grass to the path with a road to the right.



The path leaves the road at TR394662



and continues through the Memorial Park. Trees block the view of the sea which is regained coming out of the park. The 4m wide metalled path follows the cliff top with railings on the seaward side.



There are steps down at TR392657 to a wide promenade above the beach.



The promenade does extend back north towards Dumpton Gap. It is only possible to walk from Dumpton Gap to this point along the beach when the tide is out.

The promenade below the reinforced cliff follows Ramsgate's main beach to the harbour.



The road with pavement continues to a roundabout at the Western undercliff at TR375641.



This is not an attractive route and apparently nobody worries about the "No Access" sign.



The Saxon Shore Way follows the road leading up to the cliff top at the western end of the harbour/marina. It is possible to follow the road around the harbour/marina below the cliff though there is a sign saying "No Pedestrian Access" to port at TR381645.

The route follows the road leading back to the port past the tunnel entrance. There are several sets of steps up to the cliff top. Just past the tunnel the promenade ends and there is an ornamental path up to the cliff top and gardens.





There is no sea view from the gardens because of trees.



The path turns inland to the road around the Pegwell Bay Caravan Park, Belle View pub and The Sir Stanley Grey Hotel. The two latter buildings are built up to the cliff edge.



The route then follows a private unmade road past Coastguard Cottages. There are bushes obscuring the sea view.



There are a couple of cottages on the seaward side of the path at TR361642. The path continues slightly inland of the partly fenced cliff edge with bushes obscuring the sea view at times.



The path emerges at TR351643 onto a disused road to the old hoverport.



There are steps up to the A256 Sandwich Road by the Viking Ship.



It is possible to walk across the old terminal which is rapidly being reclaimed by nature and it would be preferable to have another new set of steps up at the SW corner of the old site.



This is the start of the Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve a SSSI. At the top there is a broad path initially set

back from the road that goes behind the petrol station.



It is preferable to leave the SSW for a narrow unmade path across the reserve to a kissing gate leading to the Pegwell Bay Country Park.



There is a 2m wide path along the seaward side of the park with an entrance to the Stonelees Nature Reserve at TR340628.



There is a narrow unmade path through the reserve leading to a wire fence at Pfizers recreation ground. At the time there were two **locked** kissing gates on this path.



Continuing along the path it turns inland to join the A256 at TR337625.



This is the closest point to the coastal boundary of Thanet.

4.6.3 Access Issues

4.6.3.1 Kingsgate Castle TR395707 to TR399702 0.7 km

This would appear to be excepted land. The Castle, which is now private apartments, is built right up to the cliff edge. There are private houses and gardens on the other side.

4.6.3.2 North Foreland Private Estate TR402690 to TR399688 0.3 km

The Viking Way continues along the top of the cliff top road through the first part of this estate. Access is blocked at TR400671, the entrance to a building site. This deviation is around a number of cliff top houses and gardens. It may well be that it is all excepted land.

4.6.3.3 Ramsgate Harbour/Marina TR381645

This is just a misleading "No pedestrian access" signpost on the road around the bottom of the cliff. Apparently locals ignore it. The Saxon Shore Way follows the cliff top road from Ramsgate Harbour which probably has better views. The bottom road is closer to the sea and leads to the Western Undercliff.

4.6.3.4 Pegwell TR366640 to TR363642 0.3 km

There is a deviation away from the coast around the Pegwell Bay Caravan Park, a pub and hotel.

4.6.3.5 Pegwell Bay TR354644 to TR341622 2.5 km

Coastal access could be improved here. There is access across the old hovercraft terminal and there could be access across a short stretch of saltmarsh to the path leading to the Pegwell Bay Country Park. This gives access to the Stonelees Nature Reserve where the Thanet Coast ends.