

Main walk last checked	Bus option last checked	Deal to Dover last checked	
12 June 2023	13 August 2022	12 June 2023	
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## Dover to Deal (or vice versa)

### Along the White Cliffs of Dover

<b>Length</b>	<b>Dover to Deal (or vice versa)</b>	17.7km (11.0 miles)
	<b>Taking a bus from St Margaret's Bay</b>	8.2km (5.1 miles)

**Toughness** 3 out of 10

**Maps** OS Explorer 138 (the last mile or so is on Explorer 150), OS Landranger 179

### Features

This simple walk (it should be impossible to get lost if you keep the sea on your right-hand side) is nevertheless one of the finest coastal walks in England, taking you right along the top of the famous White Cliffs of Dover. On a clear day you will enjoy stunning views of the English Channel, the ferries buzzing in and out of Dover Harbour, and the French coast from Boulogne to Dunkerque.

Surprisingly, for a walk that seems to spend much of its time on the airy heights, not much exertion is involved. There are only two significant climbs - one out of Dover and the other out of St Margaret's Bay: otherwise the terrain is level or gently undulating. The last quarter of the walk is totally flat, along a tranquil coastal path behind the pebble beach of Deal. Though less dramatic than the White Cliffs, this section of the walk is full of historical and natural interest, passing Walmer and Deal castles and - in late May and early June - a stunning display of coastal flora. (At this time of year the cliffs above Dover are also covered with the yellow flowers of wild cabbage, apparently brought there by the Romans.) *If doing the main Dover to Deal walk, you only need pages 1-8 of this walk document.*

### Walk Options

**a) Taking a bus from St Margaret's Bay:** You can cut the walk short by taking a bus back to Dover from St Margaret's Bay, making a walk of **8.2km (5.1 miles)**. The bus passes right by Dover Castle, and buses from the same stop go to Deal, should you wish to have more time to explore that fascinating town. *See paragraph 34 on page 6 for details. If doing this option you only need pages 1-6 of this document.*

**b) Deal to Dover:** There is a lot to be said for doing this walk in the reverse direction (though one possible disadvantage in winter is that you will have the sun in your eyes all day: in summer this is less of an issue, as the sun is higher in the sky). Benefits include getting the longest train journey over first and the fact that scenery gets more and more dramatic as the day goes on, ending in the magnificent cliffs just before Dover. Dover itself can admittedly seem a bit cheerless after such fine scenery, but most of the walk through the town is on the seafront.

In this direction you also have a choice of lunch pubs: you can stop after just 4.6km (2.9 miles) at the Zetland Arms, which has some outside tables by the sea, or carry on for another 4.7km (2.9 miles) to the Coastguards pub in St Margaret's Bay, with its pleasant terrace overlooking the bay.

Meanwhile there is a positive embarrassment of tea options, starting with the Bluebirds tea room just before St Margaret's Bay (if it is still open: in 2022 it was operating Friday to Sunday 10-3pm only), the seasonal tea kiosk on St Margaret's beach, tea and cakes served in the Coastguard pub which some report to be very good, the Pines Garden Tea Room, and Mrs Knott's Tea Room in the National Trust-owned South Foreland lighthouse. If none of those tempt you, the White Cliffs Visitor Centre on the cliffs overlooking the Port of Dover also serves tea, and in the town itself there is a Weatherspoons pub and a Costa Coffee open till 6pm Monday to Friday, 5.30pm Saturday and 4.30pm Sunday.

*Directions for this option start in paragraph 61 on page 8. You only need pages 1-3 and 8-10 of this document if doing the walk in this direction*

## Transport

One train an hour runs from **London St Pancras** to Dover Priory (high speed supplement payable: journey time 1hr 05 minutes), though you can also take a Canterbury-Margate train and change at Ashford for Dover (journey time 1hr 12 minutes).

Alternatively, there is an hourly train from **London Charing Cross** (journey time 1hr 50 minutes) daily, and the same on Mondays to Fridays only from **Victoria** (journey time 1hr 58 minutes).

Catch **the first train after 9am** from St Pancras to get to lunch in St Margaret's in good time: that would mean an 8am train from Charing Cross or Victoria but a 9am one is OK if you do not dawdle too much.

Buy a **day return to Deal**, valid on Southeastern high speed or not, as appropriate. If you purchase your ticket from a Southeastern ticket machine (eg the ones on the mezzanine where the high speed platforms are at St Pancras), you can often get a cheaper Super Off Peak ticket (not available before 9.30 Mondays to Fridays).

**Trains back from Deal** go hourly. Usually these run straight through to St Pancras and take 1hr 26 minutes to St Pancras, but in peak hours Monday to Friday (and seemingly rather erratically at other times), they go to Charing Cross, taking 2hrs 13 minutes. At such times, changing at Ashford International gets you to St Pancras in 1hr 48 minutes, while if trains are running direct to St Pancras and you want to change at Ashford to avoid the high speed supplement, it can take anything from 2hrs 30 to 2hrs 45 to get back to Charing Cross. In such cases it might even be quicker to return to Victoria via Ramsgate and Margate.

There are **buses** every hour till 7pm (Monday to Saturday) or every two hours till 6pm (Sundays) from **St Margaret's Bay** to both Dover and Deal: see paragraphs 34-41 on page 6 for details.

## Lunch and tea places

The **White Cliffs Visitor Centre** on the cliff above Dover Eastern Docks, 3km (1.9 miles) into the walk, has a large National Trust cafe with a view of the sea and some outside tables. It serves pasties, soup and (small-ish) hot dishes as well as hot drinks and cakes, and is open 10am to 5pm daily from March to October and 11am to 4pm November to February.

**Mrs Knott's Tea Room**, 6km (3.7 miles) into the walk is a period tea room in the National Trust-run South Foreland Lighthouse and is open at the same times as the lighthouse itself, 11am-5pm from late March to late October.

The **Pines Garden Tea Room and Museum** in St Margaret's Bay, 7km (4.3 miles) into the walk, serves light lunches and cakes from 10am to 4pm Wednesday to Sunday year round.

The **Coastguard** (01304 853 051) on the beach in St Margaret's Bay, 7.7km (4.8 miles) into the walk, describes itself as Britain's closest pub to France. It is open and serving food all afternoon (at least in the summer months) until 9pm Mondays to Saturdays and to 5pm on Sundays. It has a pleasant open-air terrace directly overlooking the beach.

There is also a **tea kiosk** on the beach in St Margaret's Bay, open daily in the summer and at weekends in the winter, though possibly not if the weather is poor. As well as tea and cakes it offers sandwiches, pasties, chips and other delicacies until 5pm or 6pm in summer and presumably until just before dusk in winter.

The **Bluebirds tea room** in the former coastguard hut just beyond St Margaret's Bay had resumed opening on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 to 3pm in May 2022, but I am not sure if it is still operating in 2023. If open, this is a charming place to have tea.

**Zetland Arms** (01304 370114). Located at the start of Deal Beach, 12.4km (7.7 miles) into the walk, this pub has some outside tables right on the beach. It is open for drinks all afternoon daily and serves food from 12pm to 3pm Monday to Wednesday, to 8pm Thursday to Saturday and to 5.30pm on Sundays.

**Deal Pier Kitchen** at the end of Deal Pier is recommended as a tea stop for its tremendous views of the town, but it currently closes at 4pm Monday to Thursday and 5pm Friday to Sunday. As well as hot food and cakes, it also has an external tea kiosk with outside tables overlooking the sea.

Otherwise, the seafront opposite Deal Pier has various cafes, bars and pubs, too many to list here. The prominent **Port Arms** pub on the seafront has now been modernised but the adjacent **Kings Arms** still retains a traditional air. The optional detour through the old part of Deal at the end of the walk also takes you to a traditional back street pub, the **Ship Inn**.

## Swimming notes

The best place to swim in the sea on this walk is at **St Margaret's Bay**, a pretty spot which has a good depth of water for swimming at all times, apart from very low tide when there is a shallow sea over rocks, and seems to be relatively sheltered from currents.

**Walmer** and **Deal** beaches (especially the former) offer plenty of tranquility but you will find that the tidal currents are very strong here, running northwards parallel to the shore when the tide is coming in and southwards when it is going out. This means that you find yourself swimming in one direction only and making almost no headway relative to the beach (or even going backwards). This is definitely *not* a place to swim too far from the shore. A slightly more sheltered beach may be the one at **Kingsdown** just south of the Zetland Arms pub, but the tide goes out quite a way here at low tide.

**Dover** harbour seems an unlikely place for a swim, but it does have beaches and a designated swimming area, and is used for training by cross-channel swimming clubs. As well as the main beach, there is a small one at the far northern end of the esplanade, just before the walk route turns off it, which actually makes a very tranquil swimming spot. The port and the castle make a scenic backdrop.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

**Warning:** take care near the cliff edges on this walk, as they are crumbly and liable to collapse. The official advice is to keep five metres from any cliff edge

For the **Deal to Dover** walk go to paragraph 61 on page 8.

### **Dover station to the White Cliffs Visitor Centre (3km/1.9 miles)**

1. Leave **Dover Priory station** on platform one, the main exit, and turn right. Carry on up the station approach to merge with a main road in 100 metres and carry on downhill along it.
2. There is soon a fine view of **Dover Castle** on the hill ahead. In 200 metres metal barriers force you round to the left for 70 metres to traffic lights.
3. Cross the road at the lights and on the far side turn right. In 60 metres turn left up Priory Street.
4. In 60 metres, at a T-junction, go right into Dover's main shopping street.
5. In 80 metres this is pedestrianised. In another 200 metres you come to Market Square. Walk straight ahead diagonally across this and on into King Street, the traffic-bearing road that runs along the square's left-hand side.
6. In 50 metres, where the traffic-bearing road turns right into Queen Street, go straight on into a pedestrian underpass 30 metres ahead, signposted 'Seafront'.
7. At the far end of the underpass go up the steps and straight on through a circular plaza to get to the seafront promenade, where you go left.
8. After 400 metres the line of buildings ends on the left (the last one being a Premier Inn) and you pass a toilet block. There is now a main road to the left.
9. 80 metres after the toilet block, turn left to cross the road at pedestrian lights, following a green cycle path signposted 'Eastern Docks'.
10. On the far side of the road go half right up East Cliff (not the confusingly named 'Marine Parade, also known as East Cliff' that runs alongside the main road, but the narrow road that runs between the back of the seafront houses and the cliff).
11. In 300 metres you come to an open area, with the ferry terminal now just ahead. Go straight on along a line of houses (Athol Terrace).
12. In 80 metres the road ends and it becomes a concrete path. Follow this, with the cliff to your left and the port to your right.
13. In 220 metres the path passes under a road flyover. Beyond this keep on up steps and carry straight on up the hill for another 250 metres on a tarmac path.
14. At the top of the hill, and just before a partial wooden barrier that leads onto a road, turn right through a kissing gate onto a grassy path following a yellow England Coast Path arrow.
15. In 15 metres veer left with the path onto a path that contours along the slope, ignoring other paths branching off right downhill.
16. Keep to this path, ignoring others slanting off up or down the hill, until in 200 metres you come to a large grassy space, with a car park uphill to the left, and a telescope 60 metres ahead to the right.
17. Walk to the telescope. Turn right down the steps just before it, and at their bottom pass through a gate and turn left on a well-defined metre-wide path, parallel to the port. *(If in any doubt at this point, simply walk up to the car park, and turn right until you get to the White Cliffs Visitor Centre).*

**Dover Eastern Docks** - the main ferry terminal and Britain's largest freight port in tonnage terms - is ahead of you, and **Dover Castle** is on the hill to your left. Note the ruined stone tower to the left of the church: this is the **Roman Lighthouse**. The cliffs below the castle contain a **World War II bunker**, later converted to a civilian command centre for us in the case of nuclear war: closed in the 1980s it is open to the public as part of the castle visit.

18. In 60 metres the path goes into an area of scrub. In 80 metres more, once you emerge from the scrub. The **White Cliffs Visitor Centre**, which has a cafe and information panels about the cliffs, is uphill to the left: if you want to visit it there are steps up to it on the left in another 20 metres. Otherwise, keep straight on, now on a wide, straight shelf.

**White Cliffs Centre to St Margaret Bay (4.7km/2.9 mi)**

19. Staying on the shelf, in 200 metres you pass through a gate. 50 metres beyond this a concrete path merges from the left, and you come to a telescope and a bench. **Here you have a choice:**
- If you keep ahead on the path you are on, in 70 metres you find yourself on a thrilling shelf cut high into the chalk cliff. At the end of this, in 300 metres, pass through a kissing gate and carry on along a broad hard-surface path. Continue with the directions in paragraph 20.
  - **An alternative to the shelf**, if you suffer from vertigo or if it is wet when the shelf path can be slippery, is to veer left uphill for 40 metres just after the bench and telescope to join a car-wide gravel path slanting up the hillside. In 200 metres you pass through a kissing gate 100 metres to the right of the radar tower of the Dover Coastguard facility. Beyond, follow the hard-surface path downhill for 100 metres. Here, by a kissing gate, follow the path as it turns left. Continue with the directions in the next paragraph.
20. In 300 metres descend a long set of steps with a wooden handrail.
21. At the bottom of the steps cross a 10 metre wide grassy shelf (actually an old railway line that was used in building the port). Keep straight on along the hard-surface path ahead.

**Warning:** on this next section of the walk (between here and the end of paragraph 47) **your mobile phone may switch to a French network**. Depending on your contract, you may incur roaming charges. Your phone may also switch to **French time** (one hour ahead of the UK).

The **White Cliffs of Dover** were formed 80 to 65 million years ago at the bottom of what was then a tropical ocean. The chalk is made up of the small shells of millions of sea creatures. It is estimated that it took 10,000 years to create 15 millimetres of chalk (that is a million years to make 15 metres). In places the chalk is 250 metres deep.

The cliffs are the terminus of the North Downs, which run all the way from Farnham in Surrey. Originally the ridge stretched across to France, but it was broken by a cataclysmic meltwater flood 26,000 years ago during one of the ice ages.

Incidentally, there are no bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover: the lyrics of the famous World War II song were written by Nat Burton, an American who had never been to England. Whether he knew that bluebirds are not native to the UK is not known, but their mention in the song is apparently a reference to the blue uniforms of RAF pilots.

22. You now follow this hard-surface path all the way along the cliffs for 2.2km until you come to **South Foreland lighthouse**.
23. When you are nearly level with the lighthouse, the hard-surface path veers left through a kissing gate and slants up the hill to it. Unless you want to visit the lighthouse or **Mrs Knott's Tea Room** (in which case see the point marked \* in paragraph 26 for onward directions), ignore this and carry on along the cliff top on a grass path for 100 metres, with a fence to your left

**South Foreland Lighthouse** was built in 1843 to protect shipping from the Goodwin Sands, which at low tide can be seen just off shore in the later part of this walk. Guglielmo Marconi, the radio pioneer, made the first ship to shore transmissions to this point in 1898, and it was also the site of the world's first international radio transmission, to Wimereux in France. Owned by the National Trust, the lighthouse is open to the public from 11.00am to 5.30pm, March to October.

24. In 100 metres pass through another kissing gate and follow the grass path as it slants uphill to the far end of the lighthouse compound.
25. In 130 metres, when you reach the far corner of the lighthouse compound, turn inland on a narrow path between hedges, with the lighthouse now to your left.
26. In a further 60 metres another entrance to the lighthouse is on your left. To continue the walk, ignore a track ahead, but instead turn immediately right by the entrance to the lighthouse (*\* Or if you have visited the lighthouse or tea room, exit by its eastern/side gate, cross a track and keep straight on*) to walk up the right-hand edge of a grassy space.
27. In 80 metres turn right onto a track.
28. In 400 metres, just after a wooden fence ends to your right, turn right through a kissing gate into a grassy area. Go straight ahead for about 40 metres and then turn left to follow a path parallel to the cliff edge.
29. In 600 metres where your way is blocked by a fence or a line of shrubs, turn left through a kissing gate to emerge onto a track.
30. Walk straight ahead downhill along this track, curving left with it after a few metres. In 90 metres, at a track crossroads, go right, with houses soon appearing to your right.
31. In 150 metres, the track becomes a road and in 70 metres you pass the **Pines Garden Tea Room and Museum** on your right.
32. 80 metres beyond this, at a T-junction, turn right downhill on a broad gravel track. In 50 metres you come to a road, where you go straight on, steeply downhill.
33. In 130 metres you come to the sea front. **The Coastguard** pub is on your immediate right. (If the pub is full, or you want a lighter snack, there is a **tea kiosk** in the car park, 70 metres to the left along the beach.)

*To continue with the **main walk** go to paragraph 42 on page 7.*

**To get a bus back to Dover** from this point, see the next section.

### **Bus back from St Margaret's Bay to Dover**

34. Retrace your steps up the road from the Coastguard pub for 130 metres until you get to a junction with a broad gravel track on the first hairpin bend. On the left at this point is South Sands House.
35. Do not go up the gravel track, but instead go up a flight of steps to the right.
36. The steps climb steeply uphill. In 250 metres, at the top of the steps, a metal fence starts to your left. Ignore a fork to the right here to keep straight on along the fence for 100 metres to merge with a road.
37. Keep straight on up the road and in a further 150 metres, just after a roundabout, the **bus stop** is to the left.  
  
Buses run hourly to 7pm Monday to Saturday and every two hours to 6pm on Sunday to both **Dover** and **Deal** or **Sandwich** (*two different buses, both going from the same stop: make sure you get on the right one!*).
- The bus into Dover takes 16 minutes. On the way into the town it stops right outside **Dover Castle**, if you want to visit that, but otherwise stay on the bus to the bottom of the hill, until it terminates in Pencester Road, the main town centre stop.
38. Getting off the bus in Pencester Road, continue straight ahead for 150 metres, and then turn right into Biggin Street, Dover's central shopping street.
39. In 70 metres turn left down Priory Street.
40. At the end of this, you come to a large roundabout and turn right. In 60 metres turn left to cross the road at traffic lights, and on the far side turn left. Carry on past the roundabout and on to the right up Folkestone Road.
41. In 100 metres ignore Effingham Road to the right after a petrol station, but in another 100 metres fork right down the approach road to **Dover station** right.

### **St M's Bay to the Zetland Arms (4.7km/2.9 miles)**

42. After lunch turn left out of the pub along the seafront. In 70 metres you pass the **tea kiosk**. In 60 metres more, 30 metres beyond the toilet block, turn left up steps, following an England Coast Path sign.
43. Climb these steps in zigzags all the way to the top of the cliff and then turn right on an earth path.
44. In 80 metres ignore a path uphill to the left. In another 40 metres pass through a kissing gate and keep straight on to emerge onto the open hillside in 50 metres more.
45. Keep straight on, following the cliff edge to your right (for the most part a line of scrub) and with houses uphill to your left. In 500 metres there is a tall **obelisk** uphill to the left (a monument to sailors in the merchant marine and Royal Navy who died in the Dover Strait during the two world wars) and shortly after you pass through a kissing gate.
46. In another 100 metres you pass around the end of a white building, a former coastguard hut, now host to the **Bluebirds** tea room (*if it is still operating: only Friday to Sunday 10 to 3pm in May 2022*).
47. You now continue straight ahead along the cliff top for 3km, first descending, then climbing again, and finally descending to a road with the long flat stretch of Deal beach ahead. Carry on along the road, with the beach to your right.
48. In 600 metres, at a triangular road junction (in fact, a crossroads), turn right down South Road, a gravel track, with houses left.
49. In 130 metres, the track comes out onto the seafront, just by the **Zetland Arms**.

### **The Zetland Arms to Deal (5.3km/3.3 miles)**

50. Facing the sea at the Zetland Arms, turn left on a track parallel to the sea. You now stay on this, just inland from the beach, all the way to Deal pier, a distance of 4km (2.5 miles). The route is a gravel track for 80 metres, then a

narrow path, and then a broad track again (Wellington Parade), always with houses to your left. To the right in late May and early June there is a dazzling display of flowers on the shingle beach.

51. In 1.2km, when the houses end, carry on along a tarmac foot and cycle path. 400 metres after this, you pass **Walmer Castle** (*see panel below*) on your left. 500 metres after passing the castle, the path forks. Straight ahead takes you to the road in 50 metres, but instead fork right with the cycle path to keep along the edge of the beach
52. Stay on this path, in increasingly built-up surroundings, until in 1.5km you pass **Deal Castle** (*see panel below*) on your left, the start of Deal's town centre.

**Deal beach** is popularly supposed to have been the landing site for the forces of Roman general Julius Caesar when he came to Britain in 55 BC to see if it was worth invading. He apparently decided that it wasn't and it was not until 43 AD that the Romans returned under the emperor Claudius to permanently occupy the island.

**Walmer Castle** and **Deal Castle** (*see over*) were built by Henry VIII in 1539-40 as artillery platforms to guard against a threatened French invasion. They were never permanently occupied and saw only minor military action. Walmer Castle later became the official residence of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (the ancient association of port towns in the South East of England, which were given special privileges by the crown in exchange for providing ships for the country's defence). The Duke of Wellington, victor of the Battle of Waterloo, died here in 1852, as much later did WH Smith, founder of the newsagents: both men were Lord Wardens. The castle has fine 18th century gardens and is open to the public, as is Deal Castle, also passed on this walk. Both castles are owned by English Heritage.

53. 400 metres further on, just after passing the **Port Arms** and **Kings Arms** pubs to the left, and 40 metres before you reach the pier, you come to a roundabout, marking the junction with Broad Street, which goes inland.

54. If you can get to it in time, **Deal Pier Kitchen**, the cafe at the end of Deal Pier, is recommended for its wonderful view of the town. (It has an external tea kiosk with outside tables in addition to its indoors restaurant). Otherwise the cafes, bars and pubs in the vicinity of Deal Pier should provide you with refreshment options.

55. After tea, you have a choice:

- **to go directly to the station**, walk inland up from the roundabout up Broad Street. In 80 metres, you pass the pedestrianised High Street to your right and left. In 200 metres more you come to a five way road junction. **Deal station** is the exit straight ahead, to the right of the main road.
- However, **if you want a brief flavour of old Deal**, with its atmospheric narrow streets, the detour in the following paragraphs (which takes 15 minutes or so) might be of interest. It also passes a traditional fish and chip shop open Wednesdays to Saturday from 5pm to 8pm.

**Deal** has a rather sleepy air these days, but was a major port in the days of sailing ships, when it had a reputation for drinking, vice and smuggling. Convoys of ships used to collect in the area just off its beach, which offered a sheltered anchorage due to the sandbanks of the Goodwin Sands offshore, and cargo would be loaded or offloaded from them using rowing boats.

Because of the sandbanks, the area was known among sailors as The Downs (Downs coming from the same Saxon word as the word dune). At times up to 1000 ships could apparently be seen in the bay. The centre of Deal still retains some fine buildings from this era, best seen by taking the short detour at the end of this walk, as well as many cosy nautical pubs. The town has many information boards explaining its history.

56. To do the tour, head north up the seafront from the pier. In 180 metres pass the Royal Hotel on its seaward side.

57. 130 metres beyond the hotel turn left off the seafront up Coppin Street (the fourth road on the left after the Royal).

58. In 70 metres you come to a junction with Middle Street (not identified as such here). To the right in 170 metres up this road is the charming old **Ship Inn**, if you fancy some refreshment: otherwise, to continue the walk, *turn left* on Middle Street. (The traditional fish and chip shop is on the left on this section.)

59. In 100 metres turn right up Oak Street. This brings you in 50 metres to the High Street, where you go left.

60. In 200 metres you come to a pedestrianised section of the High Street (with modern chain shops) and go straight on for 120 metres until this is crossed by a car road. Turn right up this road and in 200 metres you come to a five way road junction. **Deal station** is the exit straight ahead, to the right of the main road.

### **Deal to the Zetland Arms** **(4.6km/2.9 miles)**

*This is the start of the **Deal to Dover** walk*

61. Coming out of Deal station turn right across a car park, and then left at its far end to come to a five-way road junction. Keep straight on down the main road to the sea
62. Turn right on the seafront, just in front of the pier (which incidentally has a **cafe** at its end with magnificent views of the town, if you want to stop this early in the walk)
63. Follow first the road and then the tarmac paths all the way (4km/2.5 miles) to the bottom of Deal and later Walmer beach, passing **Deal Castle** and **Walmer Castle** on the way (see *panel page 7*), and then on along Kingsdown beach (which has wonderful beach flowers in late May and early June) to the **Zetland Arms**, a possible lunch stop, with tables by the sea.

### **The Zetland Arms to St M's** **Bay (4.7km/2.9 miles)**

64. Turn right inland on a track just beyond the pub to get to a road. Turn left on the road (the first road, going level to the left, not the one behind it



slanting uphill), with the beach to your left.

65. In 600 metres, just after the road turns right inland past some houses, climb steps onto the cliff and carry on with the sea to your left along the coast path on top of the cliffs. This gradually gets higher and higher, with one major dip midway.

**Warning:** from now until the outskirts of Dover **your mobile phone may switch to a French network.**

*Depending on your contract, you may incur roaming charges. Your phone may also switch to **French time** (one hour ahead of the UK).*

In 3km/1.9 miles, after a long gentle climb, you come to the top of a hill with an obelisk memorial (to those who served in the navy and merchant navy in the Dover Straits in both world wars) and pass a white building on the left, a former coastguard hut, now home to the **Bluebirds** tea room (*if it is still operating: in May 2022 it was Friday to Sunday, 10 to 3pm only*).

66. 40 metres beyond the hut look out for a kissing gate (slightly hidden by shrubs) in the fence to the left opposite the memorial. Go through this and turn right to resume the clifftop path.
67. Slant down left to bushes at the bottom (ie seaward) edge of the clifftop open space, as houses start uphill to the right.
68. In 400 metres the slope starts to descend steeply and in 50 metres more the path is enclosed by foliage, with the wooded cliff edge to your immediate left. In another 50 metres you pass through a kissing gate.
69. In 150 metres turn left down some steps which take you down to St Margaret's Bay beach. Turn right on this. There is **tea kiosk** on the right, or the **Coastguard** pub at the far end of the beach.

**St Margaret's Bay to the White Cliffs Visitor Centre (4.7km/2.9 miles)**

70. To continue the walk take the steep road uphill from the Coastguard pub. In 130 metres, at a hairpin bend to the right, take a road straight ahead, and

in 50 metres turn left onto Beach Road.

71. In 80 metres you pass the **Pines Garden Tea Room and Museum** on the left. In another 70 metres the road becomes a track.
72. In another 150 metres, at a track junction, go half left ahead through a kissing gate, signposted Saxon Shore Way, onto a grassy path that slants up a steep hillside.
73. In 150 metres, at the top of the hill, cross a track and go through a slightly hidden kissing gate into a field. Turn right in 30 metres to walk uphill, parallel to the cliff edge to your left.
74. In 400 metres, 20 metres before the end of the open space, turn right through a kissing gate and left on a track.
75. In 400 metres just after the track starts to descend, turn left through an unmarked gap in the hedge into a small grassy area.
76. In 80 metres the entrance to **South Foreland Lighthouse** is ahead of you. If you want to visit it or **Mrs Knott's Tea Room**, go through the gate: otherwise **turn left** up an enclosed footpath just before the entrance
77. In 60 metres this path comes out onto the cliff top and you veer right to slant down to a kissing gate in 130 metres. Beyond this follow a path parallel to the cliff edge, with a fence to the right.
78. In 100 metres you merge with a hard-surface path coming from the lighthouse to your right.
79. You now follow this hard-surface path for 2.2km. In 500 metres it skirts around a large depression for 600 metres and then, after crossing two rises, in 550 metres skirts another big depression, Langdon Hole.
80. On the far side of Langdon Hole slant left up steps with wooden railings, and at the top of them keep along the hard-surface path
81. In 300 metres more there is a kissing gate on the left. **Here there is a choice:**

- **Going through the gate** takes you onto an exciting (perhaps a little

vertiginous) path along the cliff face. In 300 metres, at the far end of this, follow a level path for 70 metres until you come to a gate to the right (beyond which is a path leading to a car park): **do not pass through the gate**, but take the path to its left, ie straight ahead, onto a shelf that slopes very gently downhill through shrubs, with fine views of Dover Harbour soon to your left.

- Or for a safer, non-vertiginous route **ignore the kissing gate** and carry on over the hill on the hard-surface path, passing through another kissing gate in 100 metres. Beyond, follow the path downhill. But in 200 metres, when the path veers right towards a car park and the White Cliffs Visitor Centre, **veer left to leave the path and go down across the grass** to merge with a lower path in 40 metres. Here ignore a gate on your right and take a path straight ahead onto a shelf that slopes very gently downhill through shrubs. There are soon fine views of Dover Harbour to your left and of Dover Castle ahead.

- 82.** After 250 metres on this shelf, the **White Cliffs Visitor Centre**, a possible tea stop, can be seen uphill to the right.

### **White Cliffs Visitor Centre to Dover station (3km/1.9 mi)**

- 83.** Carrying on along the shelf, 100 metres beyond the Visitor Centre you come out into a green space. Here turn right through a gate and then left, passing to the right of a telescope, and then go straight on through another gate in 60 metres, following an English Coast Path arrow on a post.

*If you get confused here, go uphill to the car park and turn left to its westernmost end to find the tarmac path mentioned in the next paragraph.*

- 84.** Follow the path through scrub. In 100 metres ignore a kissing gate uphill, but in another 100 metres, the path veers right to a kissing gate. Go through this and turn left downhill on a tarmac path.
- 85.** Stay on the path as it descends, passing under a road flyover in 250

metres, and then along under the cliff face, with the port entrance to the left.

- 86.** The path eventually terminates in a small terrace of houses overlooking the port entrance. At the end of this keep on down East Cliff, a narrow road between the cliff right and the back of a row of seafront houses left.
- 87.** At the end of East Cliff veer left to cross the main road and turn right on the seafront promenade.
- 88.** In 400 metres you pass a large shelter with a curved roof and slanting spire. 40 metres further on, by a monument with swimmers on top, turn right inland, passing over the official starting point of the North Downs Way (a line in the pavement).
- 89.** In 50 metres cross a circular plaza, going down a pedestrian underpass beyond. This brings you to King Street, the start of Dover's shopping area. In 80 metres a plaza opens out to the left. Veer left across this and carry on up Dover's pedestrianised high street.
- 90.** In 120 metres you pass the **Eight Bells**, a Weatherspoons pub, on the left. In another 130 metres or so, just after a car road emerges from the right and ends the pedestrian section, there is a **Costa Coffee** on the right
- 91.** To get to the station, take the next road left after Costa Coffee, Priory Street.
- 92.** At the end of this, you come to a large roundabout and turn right. In 60 metres turn left to cross the road at traffic lights, and on the far side turn left. Carry on past the roundabout and on to the right up Folkestone Road.
- 93.** In 100 metres ignore Effingham Road to the right after a petrol station, but in another 100 metres fork right down the approach road to **Dover station**.