

1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	
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Faversham to Whitstable

Start: Faversham station

Finish: Whitstable station

Length: 15.7km (9.8 miles).

Time: 4 hours 30 minutes. For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 9 hours.

Transport: Trains go from London Victoria to Faversham, journey time just over an hour.

Whitstable is one stop down the line from Faversham, so buy a day return to Whitstable.

OS Landranger Maps: 178 and 179

OS Explorer Maps: 149 and 150

Faversham, map reference TR 016609, is in **Kent**, 19km north of Ashford.

Toughness: 1 out of 10

Walk Notes: This is an easy walk – it is entirely flat – and the directions are straightforward. Following the little known marshy coast of North Kent, it also provides a good contrast to the classic cliff-top walks such as Seaford to Eastbourne (book two, walk 28) or Hastings to Rye (book two, walk 29). Additional attractions include the towns at either end of the walk, both of which are worth further exploration. Faversham is an unexpected delight, with picture book medieval streets radiating from a pretty and bustling market square. Whitstable has many quaint corners and is famous for its oysters, which can be sampled at many places in the town.

The whole coast, but particularly the sea wall section before lunch, is also a haven for sea birds, which can be seen particularly at low tide in the winter months. Though the beach can seem like endless acres of mud at such times, at high tide in summer the afternoon part of the walk can also provide idyllic swimming, with

sheltered calm waters, and sea that remains the same depth for hundreds of metres. The beach in front of the Neptune pub in Whitstable is also ideal for a sunset swim. The only equidistant lunch stop, The Sportsman pub is very popular so unless you have booked well in advance you'll only be able to get drinks and light snacks (crisps etc). So picnicking on the shoreline may be the best option.

Walk Options:

- a) Alternative (longer) ending at Herne Bay.** You may vary the end of this walk, take a later lunch at Whitstable after 14km and finish at Herne Bay. The length of this route is 23.8km (14.8 miles). Follow the walk directions until [2], and then follow the directions at the end of the main text.
- b)** You can trim 2km off the morning section by taking a short cut across Nagden Marshes.

From Monday to Saturday, the 660 bus between Faversham and Whitstable passes the Sportsman pub at 10.30 and 13.30 (in the direction of Whitstable) and 11.38 and 14.38 in the direction of Faversham. (Check current times: 0871 200 221 or [Traveline website](#).)

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take the train nearest to 9.55am from Victoria Station to Faversham.

WALK DIRECTIONS

[1] ~~{Numbers refer to the map-}~~

Coming out of the north exit of Faversham station (with the Railway Hotel pub across the road to your left), *turn left along Station Road, and in 30 metres turn right along Preston Road.* In 180 metres, where the car road turns left into Store Street, keep straight on along the pedestrianised section of Preston Road. In another 170 metres, *at a T-junction, turn left onto Market Street.*

In 50 metres, *you come out into a beautiful square (Market Place). Here turn right just in front of the old market building (painted blue, and with a clock tower), passing to the left of a half-timbered house, now an estate agents. (Ignore the alley to the right of the half-timbered house.)*

In 50 metres, just past the end of the market building, the broad street you are on reveals itself as Court Street. Keep on this street, one of the best preserved medieval streets in England. In 100 metres, Crescent Road merges from the right. In another 100 metres, Court Street becomes Abbey Street as you join the Saxon Shore Way (SSW) path, your direction 30 degrees. In 350 metres *at a T-junction (with The Anchor pub directly ahead), turn left and follow the road round to the right to subsequently go between some buildings. (On your right hand side you pass by one of the oldest surviving warehouses in Britain, marked by a plaque.)* In 160 metres you come out to Faversham Creek.

Follow the fenced path to the right of a large brown brick warehouse (with the words Oyster Bay on it). Beyond this turn left and then right and then cross a tarmac lane to go through a boat

yard with boats on your left and a metal shed on your right. Go between yellow metal railings to join a path indicated by a wooden post with a Saxon Shore Way sign and a yellow arrow. At the end of the boat yard, cross a narrow metal railed white bridge and continue to follow the path, with the creek and its marshes to the left, and a field that in summer is full of aromatic fennel to the right.

Keep on this path. In 800 metres a cycle path joins it from the right. In another 700 metres, at a T-junction, where the cycle path turns right to a bridge (sign-posted to Whitstable and Graveney), your route is to turn left towards a couple of red brick houses 200 metres distant (Nagden Cottages).

In 70 metres, go through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal fieldgate. You can continue along this lane which merges with another before Nagden Cottages. However the official route is to turn right across a field, (often overgrown), your direction 20 degrees. In another 130 metres, go through another metal kissing gate, and turn left along a shingle lane, your direction due west. In 150 metres, you pass Nagden Cottages on your left-hand side. Just beyond this, you come to a rusted metal fieldgate. Go through a metal kissing gate to the right, to continue along the shingle track.

In 100 metres there are now two alternatives. **(i)** Take the short cut across Nagden Marshes, reducing the walk by 2km, or **(ii)** Turn left to continue along the creek and shoreline.

(i) Shortcut: Continue along the shingle car wide track. 700 metres

beyond this, and 100 metres before you get to a line of electricity pylons, turn sharp right at a green footpath sign, to head across the field not to the nearest pylon ahead, but to the next one to the east. Pass to the right of this pylon, and carry on for another 100 metres to cross a ditch on an earth bridge. (There is a decrepit footpath post here, but it may soon fall over.) Here turn left along the ditch, with the ditch to your left, heading for the sea wall. In 150 metres, you pass another footpath post (again decrepit) and in a further 270 metres, you cross a shingle track and pass through a kissing gate to climb up 70 metres onto the sea wall. Turn right through a kissing gate here and rejoin the main walk directions at the asterisk [*] below.

(ii) Shoreline route: Turn left along the footpath (Saxon Shore Way) bordered by fence on your left, your direction 260 degrees. In 90 metres turn right, now with the creek on your left-hand side. In 1.4km just past the point where Faversham Creek merges with Oare Creek you pass under some HV cables. In a further 500 metres you go through a metal kissing gate, now with a concrete sea wall on your left hand side. (The Isle of Sheppey is 1.5km to the north across the channel.) In 1.2 km just after a footpath junction with a footpath down to your right.

[*] Go through a metal kissing gate. Keep along the sea wall, passing through several kissing gates along the way. (To your left and right is the South Swale Nature Reserve, a good place to spot sea birds. The inland slope of the sea wall is also covered in wild carrot in summer.) After 2.5 km at the end of the sea wall on your left,

ignore a footpath forking left alongside a barbed wire fence to continue along the top of the sea defence embankment in the direction of a grey building (The Sportsman pub). After 350 metres go through a metal squeeze gate and in 90 metres turn right down some steps for [The Sportsman](#).

After lunch, go back up onto the sea wall and turn right to continue on the Saxon Shore Way. In 700 metres you pass by Poppet's Café down to your left. In a further 800 metres where the sea wall ends at a line of houses, you may either go behind them on the road, or walk along the shingle beach in front of them. In 800 metres, the beach and road come together again, and 100 metres later the road curves round to the right, inland. Here, [!] keep straight ahead, just inside the sea wall, taking a concrete path to the left of a public conveniences block. This looks like a dead end, but in 90 metres brings you to a metal gate. Pass through this and carry on along a wide tarmac path along the top of the beach. (From this point onwards you keep to the shoreline all the way to The Old Neptune Pub.)

In 1km where the tarmac promenade ends, continue on the beach in front of some houses. In a further 600 metres the path continues in front of some beach huts.

In 1.25km you reach a public convenience block on your right, between some tennis courts.

[Shortcut to station: Turn right up and down the steps over the sea wall to go along Coastguard's Alley. In 90 metres cross a road (this is Island Wall) and keep straight on along Nelson Road.

Ignore all ways for 200 metres off until Nelson Road ends at a T-junction with Oxford Street. Here, turn right, and in 100 metres turn left, along Cromwell Road, to reach the station on your right after 600 metres.]

In a further 150 metres you reach the **Old Neptune Pub**, a possible tea stop. [2]

[If you are intending to finish the walk at Herne Bay refer to the directions at the end of this main walk text under Alternative ending at Herne Bay.

Otherwise, from the Old Neptune, follow the tarmac road round to the right. Turn left again in 30 metres to return to the sea wall path. In 200 metres, *turn right just before the **Royal Native Oyster Stores** to leave the sea wall and walk inland, passing the Oyster Stores on your left.*

In 25 metres, ignore a road called Sea Wall to your left (though it is very picturesque), and keep straight on, passing [The Horsebridge Arts & Community Centre](#), a possible tea-stop, on your right, to over a crossroads. In a further 30 metres turn left at a crossroads, along Harbour Street to reach the (recommended) tea stop, the Tudor Tea Rooms after 20 metres on your left.

Coming out of the Tudor Tea Rooms, turn right along Harbour Street, which in another 50 metres leads onto the High Street. Note another tiny Oyster Bar, **Wheeler's Oyster Bar**, 20 metres along on the right here. After 600 metres turn left along Cromwell Road.

In 550 metres take the slip road on the right leading to **Whitstable station**.

Walk options

a) Alternative ending at Herne Bay

Continue along the coast path to Herne Bay.

Directions to Herne Bay station from the seafront: With the entrance to the Pier behind you, cross the coast road and then head south along Station Road (to the left of a large block of flats), to reach the station after 800 metres.

Ending at Herne Bay:

The Heron, Station Road, Herne Bay, CT6 5QJ (tel 01227-657 818). This is a possible tea stop, located close to Herne Bay station.

Lunch and Tea places:

Horsebridge Arts & Community

Centre 11 Horsebridge Road, Whitstable CT5 1AF (tel 01227-281174). This is a possible tea stop.

The Old Neptune Marine Terrace, CT5 1EJ, (tel 01227 272262) This is a possible tea stop. A famous Whitstable pub right on the beach, where you can sit with a pint on the shingle and enjoy the sunset across the bay.

Poppet's Café 400 Faversham Road, Seasalter, CT5 4BW. Located 9.7km from the start of the walk. This is an alternative lunch stop.

The Sportsman Faversham Road, Seasalter, CT5 4BP (tel 01227-273370). Located 9km from the start of the walk. This is the lunch stop.

The Tudor Tea Rooms 29 Harbour Street, Whitstable CT5 1AH. (tel. 01227 273167). This is the suggested tea stop.