Main walk morning last checked	Main walk afternoon last checked	Avoiding the Warren last checked	Folkestone Circular last checked
19 December 2024	21 July 2024	19 December 2024	19 December 2024
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Folkestone to Dover

Length: **Main walk** 14.8km (9.2 miles)

Avoiding the Warren 15.2km (9.4 miles)

Folkestone Circular 13.9km (8.6 miles)

Toughness: On average 5 out of 10: mostly flat or with gentle gradients, but one prolonged and steep hill climb (9 out of 10) on the main walk and Folkestone Circular: a less steep climb on the Avoiding the Warren route.

Maps: OS Landranger 179, Explorer 138

Features

This is a highly scenic coastal walk with fine sea views throughout. It introduces you to some of the quainter sides of Folkestone, a town which like many south coast seaside towns is undergoing something of a renaissance. You then climb up past Martello Towers (Napoleonic-era fortification) and out into the Warren, an interesting area of wild coastland and former landslips, where you walk along concrete sea defences and then climb on a steep, but not vertiginous, path up to the top of the cliff.

The rest of the route into Dover is along the top of the chalk cliffs, passing a fascinating series of **World War II installations**, including a rare **sound mirror** (an early form of aircraft detection that was superseded by radar), and some large gun emplacements. The only downside on this section of the route is noise from the A20 dual carriageway just inland, though this is muted when the wind is blowing from the sea (ie, from the south or south west). In compensation there is a dramatic approach to Dover – a narrow (but not difficult) ridge between an inland valley and the sea. The walk finishes by crossing the town's **Western Heights**, passing deserted 19th century forts and with wonderful views of the town and port.

*Note that the main walk route takes you along the **concrete sea defences** of Folkestone Warren, which in 2024 started to get **seriously cracked in places**. Repair work was ongoing in the summer of 2026, closing sections of the route, but there was more serious cracking further along which will need to be dealt with. That being said, as of July 2026 it was possible to walk the entire route. The path up the cliff was a little overgrown in places, but otherwise perfectly passable. If walking from Folkestone to Dover the **Cliff top route, avoiding the Warren** is a perfectly (not to say very) scenic alternative and not affected by the works.*

Walk options

Cliff top route avoiding the Warren. This option, starting in paragraph 22 on page 4, takes you directly out of Folkestone onto the cliff top, with magnificent views over the Warren, the Channel and to France. It passes the **Battle of Britain Memorial** and the **Cliff Top Cafe**, which are bypassed by the main walk. Folkestone to Dover by this route is **15.2km (9.4 miles)**.

Folkestone Circular walk. This combines all the best bits of coastal scenery near Folkestone. It follows the main walk until it has climbed out of the Warren (paragraph 35 on page 5-6), and then goes back along the cliff top to Folkestone, with magnificent views and passing the **Cliff Top Cafe** and the **Battle of Britain Memorial**. This walk is **13.9km (8.8 miles)**.

Transport

Folkestone Central is served by high speed trains out of **St Pancras**, journey time just under one hour. There is a small supplement for this train, which you can avoid by taking the hourly train out of **Charing Cross** and **London Bridge**, which takes 1hr 45 minutes. Aim to arrive in Folkestone by 11.00 am if you want to get to the Royal Oak pub in time for lunch. Buy **a day return to Dover** for the main walk, to **Folkestone** for the circular walk.

Dover is one stop beyond Folkestone and so also has high speed trains to St Pancras taking just over one hour, or trains to Charing Cross or Victoria taking 1hr 50 to 2hrs.

Swimming

In summer this walk also offers good swimming opportunities at the start or finish in Folkestone. The most popular place with locals is the **Sunny Sands** beach near the harbour. However, the **beaches below the Leas cliff top esplanade**, reachable by a short diversion from the walk route are a more scenic place for a dip.

The **Warren** also has beaches and in the Edwardian era was a popular seaside spot. But the problem here is scattered underwater rocks and the metal stumps of old groynes (breakwaters). The section of beach just before the broad concrete platform in paragraph 27 of the directions is *relatively* clear of rocks, particularly about 100 metres before the start of the platform, but beware a line of metal stumps going out to sea about 35 metres before the platform.

Dover Harbour seems an unlikely place to swim at the end of the walk - but it does have a designated bathing beach, whose water quality is regularly checked, and a cross-Channel swimming club practices here. It actually makes quite a scenic spot for a dip, with the castle up on its hill and the port away to the east.

Lunch

This is a good walk to bring a **picnic** (see early in the walk for a Tesco where you can buy a picnic if you have not brought one with you). There are numerous places on the cliff top to stop and eat it. On the main walk or the Folkestone Circular the Warren seafront is also an option.

If doing the Avoiding the Warren or Folkestone Circular routes you may be able to get a light lunch at the **Cliff Top Cafe**: see **Tea** below

Otherwise the only lunch option is the **Royal Oak** (01303 244 787), situated 6.8km (4.2 miles) into both the main and Folkestone Circular walk, and 7.1km (4.4 miles) into the Avoiding the Warren option. A somewhat basic pub serving a caravan park, it serves food 12-2.30pm Monday to Saturday and 12-4pm Sundays, and is open all afternoon for drinks.

Tea

The **Cliff Top Cafe** is 6.8km (4.2 miles) into the Avoiding the Warren route and 7.9km (4.9 miles) into the Folkestone Circular route. It is exactly what it sounds like: a cafe with a cliff edge situation and with panoramic views from its terrace of the Warren, Folkestone and the sea. The food offering was always very limited in the past, but in 2024 it seemed to be under new management, and offering some hot food with opening hours of 10-4pm Tuesday to Sunday, at least in the

summer months. In December 2024 it also had a sign for **The Foodie Hut**, offering a range of pizzas. I am not sure if this is instead of or as well as the cafe, as both were closed at the time.

In **Dover** in summer you may find refreshment options on the **seafront**. Otherwise, **La Salle Verte**, a coffee shop in the pedestrianised high street, is open till 5pm Monday to Saturday, and further up the high street there is a **Costa Coffee**, open till 6pm Monday to Friday, 5.30pm on Saturday, but only 4.30pm on Sunday. Between the two is the **Eight Bells,** a Weatherspoons pub. There is also a **station buffet** at Dover station open till 5pm Monday to Friday, but only 3.30pm Saturday. It is closed on Sundays.

On the **Folkestone Circular** walk, the **Battle of Britain Memorial**, half a kilometre further on from the Cliff Top Cafe, has a visitor's centre with a cafe that is open 11.00am to 5pm daily from 1 April to 30 September.

Folkestone itself plenty of tea options. There are **seasonal tea kiosks** by the harbour and several cafes in the Old High Street: these come and go but one that seems to be reasonably well established is the **Steep Street Coffee House**, open to 6pm Monday to Saturday and 5pm on Sundays. A bit further on, in the main shopping street in Folkestone, there is a **Costa Coffee**, open till 5pm daily.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Folkestone station to the Martello Tower (3.4km/2.1 miles)

1. Leave the platform of Folkestone station by the exit ramp, and exit the station. Turn right down the station approach road.

2. In 70 metres, at a main road, turn right under the railway bridge. Beyond the bridge, follow the road around to the right, passing a church on the left.

3. In 120 metres, at a roundabout, take the second road left, Castle Hill Avenue, a broad road with a tree-lined green strip down its centre. (The easiest way to get to this is to cross the road just beyond the roundabout).

4. In 300 metres go straight across another roundabout (there is a **Tesco** convenience store to the left if you want to buy a picnic). In another 120 metres go straight across another roundabout and keep straight on down the left hand side of the road (now Clifton Gardens)

5. In a further 100 metres, cross a road and turn left along the cliff top esplanade – **The Leas**. In 10 metres you pass a viewing platform on your right, with fine views of the beach below, and the glass-sided atrium of the **Leas Cliff Hall**, which has a cafe, to your left.

6. Keep straight on along the esplanade, with intermittent sea views to the right.

7. In 400 metres you pass under a huge metal arch commemorating the soldiers who passed through here in the First World War and come to the end of the esplanade. Ignore a road going steeply downhill, but instead go left across it to take the tarmac path parallel to it on the far side, with a black metal fence to the right and Albion Villas, a private road, to the left.

8. In 50 metres you pass a house to the left where Charles Dickens wrote part of Little Dorrit. 70 metres beyond this turn left up the second of two paved paths into a graveyard, passing three black iron posts.

9. In 90 metres, just past the church door, go right at a path T-junction. In 10 metres, ignore a path to the left opposite the church entrance, and in 30 metres ignore paths right and left.

10. In another 25 metres leave the churchyard on a path blocked by six metal posts. Keep straight on down the road beyond – The Bayle – passing the **British Lion** pub in 50 metres and veering left with the road towards **The Guildhall** pub, which you pass in another 100 metres.

11. Beyond this, ignore Bayle Street left and The Parade right and go straight on, to the right of house number 72, down the easily missed Bail Steps (spelled thus).

12. In 80 metres, at the bottom of the steps, turn right onto Old High Street, which has been revived as a "creative quarter" courtesy of money provided

by the founder of Saga Holidays, which was originally based in Folkstone.

13. In 150 metres, at the bottom of the hill, go straight across Tontine Street and then turn right, with a car park to your left. Veer left with the pavement to cross another road, The Tram Road, and then turn left to pass under a brick railway arch in another 40 metres and on down a narrow cobbled street.

*This now defunct railway used to carry boat trains to connect with cross-Channel ferries from Folkestone harbour: the part of the line crossing the harbour is now a walkway, entered by steps 60 metres to your right just before you pass under the bridge. The walkway leads to the **Harbour Arm**, the former ferry port, now refurbished, which is worth exploring.*

14. 40 metres beyond the railway bridge, opposite a fish and chip shop, turn right for 30 metres to get to the edge of Folkestone's old inner **harbour.** Turn left along this.

15. In 60 metres you pass the **Ship Inn** on your left, and in 170 metres more, where the inner harbour ends at a small beach, follow the sea wall to the left and then in 40 metres to the right.

16. Continue on along the sea wall past a much larger beach (**Sunny Sands**: completely covered by high tide).

17. In 350 metres more, at the end of the esplanade, go left up some very sturdily built zigzag stone steps (there is no other route).

*Note the sign saying **Danger 270,000 Volts** over the door at the bottom of the steps: this is the English end of a cable connection that enables us to trade electricity with France.*

18. At the top of the steps curve right up a grassy shelf, to pass in 150 metres to the right of a gable-roofed building, once a restaurant.

19. Beyond the building keep straight on uphill on a tarmac track, passing around a fieldgate in 60 metres. On the hill to the left you can see a white **Martello Tower** *(a white circular fort, one of a chain built for defence in the Napoleonic Wars.)*

20. In 100 metres you pass a derelict concrete structure. Just beyond this (and before a concrete shelter also on the left) veer left uphill to emerge in 30 metres into a grassy area (a mini golf course in summer) and carry on uphill on its seaward edge, aiming to the right of the Martello Tower.

21. In 100 metres you pass a National Coastwatch hut and start to descend the other side of the hill, still keeping to the seaward edge of the green.

22. In 100 metres more you pass to the right of some tennis courts and join a track coming from the right. **Here you have a choice:**

- For the **Cliff top route avoiding the Warren**, keep on the track and continue with paragraph 36 on page 6.
- For the **main walk route** continue with the next section

Through the Warren (3.4km/2.1 miles)

23. Almost immediately **fork right off the track** onto a path slanting downhill, signposted to the Warren.

24. In 120 metres turn right, directly downhill, on a broad grassy strip leading down to the sea.

*At very high tide the route in paragraph 25 is not possible and you would have to either wait for the tide to fall or do the **Cliff top route, avoiding the Warren** instead: see paragraph 22 above.*

25. In 70 metres you come to some steps that take you down onto the beach. Turn left along the beach and in 230 metres climb up onto the concrete esplanade.

26. You now stay on this concrete esplanade for a considerable distance (but follow the directions in the next few paragraphs carefully to identify the exit point). **The esplanade is getting seriously cracked in places, so watch where you are putting your feet.** Note a number of metal doors set into the cliff on this section – see the panel overleaf for the explanation of these.

If the esplanade is impassable due to high waves or erosion damage, escaping up any path to the left will take you to a road alongside the railway track. Keep to this, ignoring any tracks slanting downhill to the right, even when the road is at one point blocked by a Network Rail gate (there is a footpath gate to the right of

*it). After this the road turns into a track, and eventually slants gradually downhill, diverging from the railway line. It comes down to the wide concrete platform mentioned in paragraph 28, but **50 metres before this, turn left up steps** and continue with paragraph 31.*

27. In 600 metres, at the end of a beach, the esplanade widens into a **broad concrete platform** about 70 metres wide (wide enough to land a helicopter on), and in another 350 metres it narrows again with **chalk cliffs** to the left (watch out for rock falls here).

> These concrete sea defences date from 1950-55, when they were created to stop landslips in the **Warren**, the wild hilly area uphill to your left. Drainage tunnels were also dug - presumably these are what lie behind the metal doors noted in paragraph 26.
>
> The worst of the landslips was in 1915 when the Folkestone to Dover railway was buried under 65 feet of earth which also flowed 230 metres out to sea. The line did not reopen until 1919. The concrete platforms spoiled what was an extensive - and apparently sandy - beach in late Victorian and Edwardian times. The area (less scrub-filled than it is now) was also a popular picnic spot.
>
> There was even a station - **Warren Halt** - which had a tea kiosk and a footbridge over the line. It first opened in 1886, closed in 1888 after protests by the landowner, then re-opened for the summer months only from 1908 to 1915 and 1924 to 1939. After the Second World War it was used as a staff halt serving a works depot until some time in the 1950s.
>
> The current footbridge is **not** the site of the former station, however: it was about a kilometre to the east. There is still a Network Rail storage area on the site, but nothing remains of the halt or its footbridge. The apparent route of the zigzag path that led down to it from the cliffs above can still be faintly seen on the cliff behind it.

28. In 150 metres more ignore a track slanting up to the left. In 500 metres more descend a ramp onto **another broad concrete platform**, now with green slopes to the left.

29. In 250 metres, 80 metres before the end of this platform, ignore a path slanting uphill, more or less directly ahead *(this **does** go to the footbridge in paragraph 32 but it is rather steep and eroded in its early sections),* **and instead turn sharp left** (ie back on yourself) up a gravel track.

30. In 50 metres **turn right to go steeply uphill on wooden steps** (ignoring two minor chalk paths to the right just before this point)

31. In 80 metres, at the top of the steps and the hill, follow the path up to and along the railway line (hidden by vegetation and so not evident until a train passes).

32. In 150 metres more cross the railway line using the footbridge. On the far side, turn right and follow a narrow path with the fence of the railway line to your right. Encroaching vegetation makes the path tricky at times, and it can also be treacherously slippery in the wet, but persist as the path falls and then rises alongside the railway line. *(At this point it still seems impossible that there is any way up the cliff to your left, but do not worry: there is.)*

33. In 350 metres, after a section where the path rises above the railway line, the path suddenly turns away from the railway line down wooden steps. After a plank bridge, the path curves right, and in 20 metres starts to climb more wooden steps.

34. **Follow these steps all the way to the top of the cliffs** – a steep climb, but not a vertiginous one, initially through scrub, but emerging at the top by some fine grassy platforms which are ideal **picnic** spots (though beware of the possibly crumbly cliff edge). On a clear day you can easily see France from here on a bearing of 140 degrees, and Dungeness nuclear power station on a bearing of 220 degrees.

35. At the very top of the path, you find yourself facing a caravan park. You can see the **Royal Oak** pub on the far side of the road just beyond the caravan park. If you are planning to eat there, there is a path to the road ten metres to the right of where you are standing, marked by a yellow arrow. Otherwise, at the top of the path up the cliffs, **you have a choice:**

- For the **main walk to Dover**, *turn right* and refer to the paragraph 51 on page 6.

- For the **Folkestone Circular walk**, *turn left,* with the caravan park to the right and the cliff edge to your left and continue with paragraph 107 on page 10

Cliff top route, avoiding the Warren (3.7km/2.3 mi)

36. Having kept on the track in paragraph 22, in 80 metres, where the hedge to your left ends, keep along the seaward edge of a park.

37. In 150 metres pass into another section of the park and go diagonally across it, diverging from its seaward edge towards its top left-hand corner.

38. In 250 metres, when you get to this top corner, follow a tarmac lane that diverges from the residential road to your left. The lane leads uphill, towards a Martello Tower converted into a house.

39. In 120 metres, where the road swings right just beyond the Martello Tower, carry straight on up a path. In another 120 metres cross a high footbridge over a road and keep on uphill on the path.

40. In 400 metres, more or less at the top of the hill, you come to a three-way footpath junction marked by a footpath sign. Here turn right, following the North Downs Way.

41. In 5 metres you come out onto the flat cliff top. In another 20 metres veer left with the path along a wire mesh fence, ignoring a path off to the right.

42. You are soon on a footpath on the edge of the cliff top, with the fence to your left. In 400 metres the path emerges onto the mown grass of the **Battle of Britain Memorial** (which has a seasonal cafe).

43. Keep to the seaward edge of the memorial for 250 metres. When the mown grass ends, pick up a path through rougher grass alongside a field fence near the cliff edge. In 120 metres this starts to descend steps into a gully.

44. After descending into a dip and climbing up the otherside you come out onto the driveway of a house. Turn left on this.

45. In 30 metres turn right following a North Downs Way sign, onto a path that follows the edge of gardens along the cliff edge

46. In 400 metres the gardens end, and the path runs through a series of spaces where it is partly or fully fenced, or goes along the edge of grassy spaces, always keeping near to the cliff edge.

47. In another 350 metres you come to a gravel parking area. Cross to the landward side of this, to find a signposted path along the landward side of a hedge, which passes the entrance to the **Cliff Top Cafe** on the right.

48. In 80 metres you are back on the open cliff top again. Carry on along this, mostly on open grassland but with occasional sections between thorn bushes.

49. In 850 metres the path runs between a caravan park left and the cliff edge.

50. In another 150 metres, at the end of the caravan park a path from the Warren joins from the right. 10 metres further on a path to the left leads the short distance to the main road, on the other side of which is the **Royal Oak** pub, but otherwise **remain on the cliff top path** and continue with the directions in the next section.

Along the cliffs to the edge of Dover (4.6km/2.9 miles)

51. In 70 metres the path goes into thorn bushes.

52. Emerging from the bushes in another 100 metres, it forks. The North Downs Way and Saxon Shore Way is the left fork but a more attractive route is the path straight ahead, marked with a yellow arrow, which skirts just below the cliff top

53. In 80 metres a tube metal fence starts to the right (welcome, as the path is vertiginous at this point).

54. In 300 metres, where the fence ends, you are on a headland which is a fabulous **viewpoint** back along the Warren

55. Keep to the right-hand side of the green open space on the headland, with the cliff to your right. In 50 metres pass through wooden posts,

onto a faint path on the edge of the cliff.

56. In 80 metres you pass to the left of a concrete World War Two gun emplacement and merge with a wide tarmac path (the North Downs Way).

57. In 170 metres you pass a rare **sound mirror** *(a concave concrete dish to focus sound – an early form of aircraft detection that was superseded when radar was developed early in World War Two).*

58. In 350 metres, at the top of the hill, the tarmac path goes through a gate, but ignore this and instead go right for 30 metres and then left through a kissing gate*,* following a North Downs Way sign, now with a fence to your right.

59. In 250 metres you pass around the end of a steep bank of earth and a round brick structure, and keep straight on. 40 metres later pass through a kissing gate.

60. In another 200 metres there is a kissing gate to your right. Pass through this onto the seaward side of the fence, into a small area of bushes.

61. The path now carries on just inland from the cliff edge for some way. There are better views to be had nearer the edge, and some minor paths here, but the ground is rough and you should beware of hidden obstructions or holes in it that you might trip over or fall into. Official advice is to keep at least five metres away from chalk cliff edges, which erode fast and can collapse suddenly.

62. Eventually, after several hundred metres, the main path curves left onto a relatively narrow strip between the fence and cliff edge. *Here, just before the path goes into thorn and gorse scrub, there is a good view down the cliff to **Samphire Hoe**, the construction site for the Channel Tunnel in the late 1980s and a place where the spoil from the excavations have been re-used to create a nature reserve. You can visit this: see paragraph 68. At the further, eastern end of the hoe, note the ventilation fans for the tunnel. The circular areas nearby, one of them now a car park, were the construction shafts for the tunnel (they dug downwards, then both inland and out to sea).*

63. The path goes now goes into a long section of thorn and gorse scrub. In 300 metres, just after the end of this, there is a particularly good **World War II gun emplacement** to your right (the first one you come to, almost completely concealed by grass in summer). You can go inside this (*at your own risk!! And see* ** *below*) and get an idea of what it must have been like to stand guard on this coast. To do this, take the path to the right just before the emplacement, to find the entrance down steps to the left just before the cliff edge. *(** In July 2024 a bramble bush was half blocking the entrance stairs to this bunker, so it may now be inaccessible...)*

64. Just beyond this gun emplacement, the path turns left for 5 metres and then right to run between wire fences past another gun emplacement.

65. After more gun emplacements over the next 200 metres, most of them buried in the ground, you emerge onto a fine section of the cliff path, which follows an undulating ridge between valley and sea.

66. In 400 metres, at the top of a rise, pass through a kissing gate. You now have a wire fence to your right.

67. In another 80 metres the path starts to descend, at first gradually and then more steeply.

*On this descent, note a line **of three brick chimneys** stretching away across the hillside below. These are ventilation shafts to let the smoke out the tunnel of the Folkestone to Dover railway in steam train days.*

68. At the bottom of the dip pass through a kissing gate and pass to the **right** of the chimney to keep along the fence (with the fence to your immediate right), **ignoring the much broader and more obvious path** to the left of the chimney

- To go down to **Samphire Hoe, turn left** immediately beyond the kissing gate, following a faint path heading downhill and inland along the left-hand edge of the field. In 180 metres turn right on a tarmac cycle path alongside the A20, to come to the entrance tunnel to the Hoe on the right. There is a pedestrian walkway down the left-hand side of the tunnel. Down on the Hoe itself there is a **tea kiosk**,

open till about 5pm daily, sometimes later, possibly seasonal.

69. Otherwise carry on parallel to the cliff, with the fence to your right, climbing gently. To your right is **Shakespeare Cliff** *(so named because it is the presumed location of the cliff in King Lear)*.

70. In 350 metres pass through a kissing gate, ignoring another through the fence to your right just beyond it, (which leads nowhere, due to cliff erosion).

71. In 200 metres more ignore another kissing gate in the fence and in 300 metres another.

72. In 80 metres more you start to descend quite steeply. There is a good view of **Dover Harbour** ahead here, but (except possibly in winter) you do not see this in full until you have descended for another 100 metres or so.

73. In another 50 metres pass through a kissing gate in a field corner and keep on downhill beyond it.

74. In 20 metres you come to a metal fence overlooking a beach and the railway line. *(See panel opposite for a description of the view.)* Turn left here down a concrete path.

Over the Western Heights to Dover station (3.4km/2.1 mi)

75. In 200 metres the path comes to a dual carriageway and curves right parallel to it, and in another 80 metres it turns left down steps to cross the dual carriageway in an underpass.

76. At the far end of the underpass go right up steps and carry straight on down a road.

77. In 60 metres turn left up King Lear's Way, following a North Downs Way sign. In 30 metres go right onto Kings Ropewalk.

78. In 120 metres follow this road as it curves left to come to a dead end. Here go left up a tarmac path beyond the last house on the left.

79. Follow this path as it climbs uphill behind the houses and then in 70 metres turns right up steps.

80. Halfway up the steps turn right through a kissing gate - or if you miss this turn right through a kissing gate at the top of the steps. Either way you find yourself on a path that slants up across the hillside.

The beach below you was an important part of Dover's attractions before the railway sliced across it: it is now almost entirely cut off from the town, only accessible by a rather obscure footbridge.

The large white building at the far end of the beach was the **Lord Warden Hotel**, a grand establishment for cross-channel ferry passengers (now closed). The original terminus of the railway, **Dover Town** station, was in front of it. No trace of this now remains and you would never guess that this area was once a busy commercial centre of the town.

The pier to the right of the hotel is **Admiralty Pier** from where paddlesteamers crossed to France. Train tracks ran onto the pier and just before the First World War a grand station, **Dover Marine**, was built here, initially used for troop movements, then opened to civilian passengers in 1919. It is the long low red structure with a grey roof on the pier, a little way to the right of the Lord Warden Hotel. It remained in use until the opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994. It is no longer connected to the railway but has found a second life as a terminal and car park for cruise ship passengers (for which Dover is the second largest port in the UK, after Southampton).

81. In 300 metres you pass through a wooden gate (with a somewhat pointless kissing gate to its right) and carry straight on up the path.

82. In 200 metres more a wider path joins from the left and you carry on along this, between shrubs.

83. In 250 metres you come to a road: merge with this and carry straight on. In 80 metres merge with a second road and carry on, now slightly downhill

84. In 120 metres go left at a road T-junction.

- If you wish you can follow this road all the way to the bottom of the hill, to a point in 750 metres where the road turns sharp right to a three way junction. Just before this, there are steps to the left leading down to

Folkestone Road at a point near to Dover station. But the route described below is both scenic and interesting and worth following unless you are very pressed for time.

85. After 150 metres on the road ignore a road to the right signposted "Drop Redoubt Fort and Grand Shaft" (though this area is worth exploring if you have time).

86. In another 130 metres, where the road emerges from between banks, go right through a kissing gate and up steps that climb up the open hillside, signposted North Downs Way.

87. At the top of the first set of steps ignore a path ahead and instead veer left with the path you are on, uphill on steps with a fence to your right.

88. In 50 metres more, at the top of the steps, go through a kissing gate onto what is in fact the rampart of a **Napoleonic era fort**, though that is not yet evident at this point.

89. In another 100 metres there is a fine view of Dover, which includes Dover station in the valley to your left, and **Dover Castle** on the hill ahead.

90. In 50 metres more you can see the massive nineteenth century military fort below you to the right: continue on the path along the rampart to the left of this.

91. In 100 metres curve right with the fortifications, keeping to the path along the ramparts, and ignoring paths that descend down the hillside. *You now have a fine view of the port of Dover and Dover Castle. In front of the church to the right of the castle, you can see the remains of the **Roman lighthouse**.*

92. In 80 metres the path starts to descend more steeply. In 20 metres more, there are two arrows on a fence post and an England Coast Path post. 10 metres after this **slant left downhill, away from the fort**, heading for a gap in the bushes.

93. In 30 metres you pass a minimalist bench on your right inscribed "Take a pew - enjoy the view". In another 30 metres, by a kissing gate to the right, **turn left down the steep hill** on wood and earth steps

94. Halfway down the hill you pass through a kissing gate and carry on down steps that are now stone (and **slippery when wet** - it is worth holding the handrail as recommended by a sign).

95. At the bottom of the steps carry on down a broad path.

96. In 100 metres, at a T-junction with a tarmac path just before a road, go right, following the North Downs Way sign.

97. In 20 metres merge with the road and curve left downhill on it. In 150 metres this brings you down to a dual carriageway, where you go left.

98. You can keep straight on along this road until you come to a large roundabout, where you go left up Folkestone Road to the station, but **for tea in Dover high street** cross the road at the traffic lights in 60 metres and carry straight on down the side road on the far side.

99. In 80 metres the road curves left into a shopping street. *Going right here and down into the underpass takes you in 300 metres to the **seafront***, but the onward route is to go left.

100. In 80 metres a plaza opens out to the left. Veer left across this and carry on up Dover's pedestrianised high street.

101. In 40 metres the **La Salle Verte** coffee shop is on your left, and in another 30 metres you pass the **Eight Bells**, a Weatherspoons pub, on the left.

102. In another 150 metres, just after a car road crosses from the right and ends the pedestrian section, **Costa Coffee** is on the right.

103. **To get to the station**, take the next road left after Costa Coffee, Priory Street. At the end of this you come to a large roundabout and turn right.

104. In 70 metres turn left to cross the road at traffic lights and on the far side turn left.

105. Carry on past the roundabout and to the right up Folkestone Road.

106. In 100 metres ignore Effingham Street to the right after a petrol station, but in another 120 metres or so, fork right down the approach road to **Dover station**.

From the cliffs to Folkestone Harbour (5km/3.1 miles)

*This is the ending of the **Folkestone Circular** walk*

107. Having turned left along the cliff top in paragraph 35, for 150 metres you have a caravan site to your right, and you then pass through scrub for 50 metres or so. After this you are on the open cliff top (largely grass, with the occasional section between bushes).

108. In 800 metres you pass the **Cliff Top Cafe** on the left.

109. Beyond the cafe, keep to the seaward side of the car park. Follow the cliff path through various sections where it is fenced, or running along the edge of grass spaces, or through scrub, until in 350 metres there are house gardens to your right.

110. After another 400 metres, and some turns in the fence, you come down steps to a concrete road (actually the drive of a house). Turn left on this, downhill.

111. In another 30 metres, before a house called **Eagle's Nest**, turn right down steps into a dip and up the other side.

112. Once up on the cliff top again, follow the path for 120 metres to emerge into a mown grass area, where you keep straight ahead along the cliff top. In 100 metres more the **Battle of Britain Memorial** (which has a seasonal cafe) is to your right.

113. Keep to the cliff edge until in 150 metres more your way is blocked by a fence. Pass through a kissing gate at the seaward end of this, and carry on along the cliff edge, with a high metal fence now to your right.

114. In 400 metres, at the end of the fenced compound, **turn right** with the path (ignoring a fork to the left) to descend 25 metres to a three-way path junction. Here go **sharp left** downhill, leaving the North Downs Way.

115. In 80 metres this path emerges into the open with a wire fence ahead and Folkestone in clear view below. Keep downhill on the path as it passes in and out of the scrub.

116. In 350 metres you cross a road on a concrete bridge and in 120 metres you come to a **Martello Tower** (not the one you passed this morning, but one further uphill). Pass to the right of this, and carry on down the road.

117. In 130 metres, just before a road junction, keep straight on into a green space and carry on down its right-hand edge.

118. In 250 metres pass to the left of a brick building (a toilet block) and carry on diagonally across the green space beyond, heading for its far left-hand corner.

119. In 150 metres, when you get to the corner, pass to the left of a bowling green and tennis courts onto a track.

120. In 80 metres, at the end of the tennis courts, leave the track and fork right up onto the grass to pass to the left of the white **Martello Tower**.

121. Beyond the tower carry on downhill across the grass, heading to the left of a building at the bottom of the hill.

122. In 170 metres pass through a gap about 20 metres to the left of the building, and turn right on the track beyond, passing almost immediately around a fieldgate. Beyond this, veer left onto the grassy shelf to the left of a road, and a tarmac path.

123. In 100 metres ignore steps going downhill just beyond a red brick shelter, but veer left down the grass bank for 30 metres to the top of the stone zigzag steps that lead to the seafront promenade. Descend these.

124. At the bottom of the steps turn right on the promenade and follow it for along the top of **Sunny Sands beach**.

125. In 350 metres you are forced to veer left, but in 40 metres you can turn right again onto the harbourside, Follow this for 280 metres until you pass under a railway bridge.

To Folkestone station (2.1km/1.3 miles)

126. Beyond the bridge keep straight on, passing to the left of the Royal George pub, to come to a main road. Cross this and turn right, and then in 60 metres turn left up the narrow Old High Street.

127. In 180 metres the **Steep Street Coffee House** is to the left.

128. In another 80 metres, at the top of Old High Street, keep straight on up some

steps into George Lane, and in 50 metres more curve right with the passage. In 30 metres, you come to a pedestrianised shopping street where you go left uphill.

129. In 30 metres more, at a T-junction, go right up Sandgate Road, and then immediately curve left up another shopping street.

130. In 150 metres, there is a **Costa Coffee** outlet on your right. In another 100 metres, where the pedestrianised area ends at a major cross roads, **you have a choice**

- **If you are in a hurry to get the train,** the most direct route to the station is to *turn right.* In 60 metres you pass the former post office on your left, and veer left with the road. In 100 metres, in front of a large office building, go left and in 30 metres go right, following a sign for A20 to Dover. In 300 metres, at a major road junction, keep straight on. In 200 metres more go under a railway bridge, and **Folkestone station** entrance is on the left.
- **If you not in a hurry, a more scenic route** from the crossroads is to *turn left*. In 100 metres you come to a roundabout. Go right here onto the Leas, the cliff top esplanade that you walked along this morning. Follow this for 400 metres until you pass the glass-sided atrium to the **Leas Cliff Hall**. 50 metres beyond this, turn right up Castle Hill Avenue, with its central tree-lined strip. Follow it for 500 metres to the main road junction, where you go straight across and curve right with the road to reach the railway bridge in 100 metres. Just beyond this, **Folkestone station** is on your left.