

Main walk morning last checked	Main walk afternoon checked	Option a) last checked	Option b) last checked	Folkestone Circular last checked
10 May 2018	10 May 2018	3 December 2016	29 Sept 2016	29 February 2016
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Folkestone to Dover

Length:	Main walk	14.8km (9.2 miles)
	a) Via the Clifftop Cafe	15.9km (9.9 miles)
	b) Avoiding the Warren	15.2km (9.4 miles)
	c) Folkestone Circular	12.9km (8 miles) or 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 options a) and b).

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 a 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of **World War II installations**, including a rare **sound mirror** (an early form of aircraft detection that was superseded by radar), and some large gun emplacements.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.

Walk Options

a) Alternative route via the Clifftop Cafe. The magnificent climb out of the Warren on the main walk lands you on top of the cliffs beyond most of the lunch options (the one exception being the Royal Oak pub), though a 1km backtrack is possible. This alternative, starting in paragraph 31 on page 5, uses another path up the cliffs - more wooded and so with less dramatic views, though with a dramatic (though not vertiginous) route up a chalk ledge near the top - and takes you

directly up to the Cliff Top Cafe and Lighthouse Inn. It adds **1.1km/0.7 miles** to the walk, making the whole walk **15.9km (9.9 miles)**.

b) Cliff top route, avoiding the Warren. This option, starting in paragraph 21 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 gives you easier access to the various lunch options than on the main walk. Folkestone to Dover by this route is **15.2km (9.4 miles)**.

c) Folkestone Circular walk. To do this option, follow the main walk until you have climbed out of the Warren (paragraph 35 or 41): special walk directions then take you back along the cliff top to Folkestone, with magnificent views and passing the **Clifftop Cafe**, the **Lighthouse Inn** and the **Battle of Britain Memorial**. There is a choice of paths up the cliff (see paragraph 31 on page 5) making a walk of either **12.9km (8 miles)** or **13.9km (8.6 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 one of the pubs 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 26 in the directions is *relatively* clear of obstructions, but beware a line of metal stumps going out to sea about 70 metres before the platform.

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 clifftop to stop and eat it. On the main walk or the Folkestone Circular the Warren seafront is also an option.

The only lunch stop actually on the main walk route is the Royal Oak, though the Lighthouse Inn and Clifftop Cafe are reachable via a 2km diversion, or via the option **a)** route - see paragraph 35 on page 6. All three lunch options are on the Folkestone Circular and the option **b)** route.

The **Clifftop Cafe** (01303 255 588) is 6.8km (4.2 miles) into the main walk if you take the option **a)** route, 7.9km (4.9 miles) into the Folkestone Circular or if you backtrack from the main walk route, or 6.1 miles (3.8 miles) into the main walk via the option **b)** 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. It is open at weekends in the winter and daily from March, but all of this is "weather permitting": ie if it is pouring with rain, it may not be open.

The **Lighthouse Inn** (01303 254080) is 250 metres east of Clifftop Cafe and so 7.1km (4.4 miles) into the main walk via the option **a)** route, 7.6km (4.8 miles) into the Folkestone Circular or if you backtrack from the main walk route, or 6.3km (3.9 miles) into the main walk via the option **b)** route. It serves food ("pub classics") from 12-2.30pm and 6-9pm Tuesday to Saturday and 12-3.30pm on Sundays. It is open for drinks all afternoon Tuesday to Saturday but only to 6pm on Sunday. It is closed entirely on Mondays. It has a garden and a deck with a view of the sea.

The **Royal Oak** (01303 244 787), is a possible later lunch stop 6.8km (4.2 miles) into both the main walk and the Folkestone Circular walk, or 7.1km (4.4 miles) into option **b**). It is a somewhat basic pub serving a caravan park but walkers have received a warm welcome there. When last checked (December 2016) it was serving food daily.

Tea

Dover has some cafes - eg the **Dickens Corner** in the main square, though this closes at 4.30pm. **La Salle Verte** nearby is open to 5pm Monday to Saturdays. Later tea choices include a **Costa Coffee**, open till 6.30pm Monday to Saturday and 5pm on Sunday, and a **Weatherspoons** pub. There is also a **station buffet** at Dover station open till 6pm Monday to Saturday but only 3pm Sunday

On the **Folkestone Circular** walk the **Clifftop Cafe** (see **Lunch** above) is a good tea choice if you are not already using it for lunch, and the **Battle of Britain Memorial**, half a kilometre further on 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 til 6pm Monday to Saturday and 5pm on Sunday. Lastly the **station buffet** on the platform at Folkestone Central station is open till 6.30pm Monday to Saturday and 5pm on Sundays.

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, following a sign to Town Centre. 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 clifftop 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 20 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 60 metres, at the bottom of the steps, turn right onto Old High Street, which is now being revived as a "creative quarter" courtesy of money provided by the founder of Saga Holidays, which was originally based in Folkstone.
13. In 120 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 go left under a brick railway arch in another 40 metres and into 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 140 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 400 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. Beyond the building

keep straight on uphill on a tarmac track. 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.*)

19. In 120 metres you pass a derelict concrete structure, just beyond this (and before a concrete shelter also on the left) veer left uphill on the grass, and carry on uphill on the seaward edge of the green space, aiming to the right of the Martello Tower.
20. In 100 metres you pass a coastguard hut and start to descend the other side of the hill, still keeping to the seaward edge of the green.
21. In 100 metres more you pass to the right of some tennis courts and join a broad track running from the right.
Here you have a choice:
 - For **b) Cliff top route avoiding the Warren**, keep on the broad track and continue with paragraph 42 on page 6.
 - For the **main walk route** continue with the next section

Through the Warren **(2.7km/1.7 miles)**

22. Almost immediately **fork right off the track** onto a path slanting downhill, signposted to the Warren.
23. In 70 metres keep straight ahead, following an arrow on a footpath post, ignoring paths downhill to the right.
24. Follow this path as it twists and turns, occasionally descending (or even climbing) steps. In 250 metres it comes out alongside the beach, and in another 80 metres emerges onto the seafront concrete esplanade.
25. 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 somewhat 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, escaping up any path to the left will take you to a road, later a track, alongside the railway track,

which you can follow until it comes to the footbridge in paragraph 31.

26. 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 25.

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. Faint traces of the zigzag path that led down to it can be seen on the cliffs above, however, some way to the west of the two paths in use today.

27. In 150 metres more ignore a track slanting up to the left and keep to the seafront. In 500 metres more descend a ramp onto **another broad concrete platform**, now with green slopes to the left.
28. In 250 metres, 80 metres before the end of this platform, ignore a path uphill to the left (*this **does** go to the footbridge in paragraph 31 but it is rather steep and eroded in its early*

sections), **but turn sharp left** (ie back on yourself) up a car wide gravel track signposted Four Seasons Nature Trail.

29. In 50 metres **leave the track to go right, steeply uphill on wooden steps** (ignoring two minor chalk paths to the right before this point)
30. In 80 metres, at the top of the steps and the hill, walk on the level for 20 metres, and then veer right on a path parallel to a wire fence and the railway line (less obvious in spring and summer).
31. In 120 metres cross the railway line using the footbridge. On the far side, **you have a choice:**

- The **main walk route** for both **Dover-bound** and **Folkestone Circular** walkers is to **turn right** after the footbridge and refer to paragraph 32 overleaf. This takes you to an interesting and sometimes exhilarating path up the cliffs, with magnificent views. It was seriously overgrown in 2016 but in September of that year was given the strimmer treatment by the local council and so hopefully is now passable.

For walkers to Dover the only disadvantage of this route is that for those walking to Dover it misses out the **Clifftop Cafe** and **Lighthouse Inn**. It is possible to backtrack along the cliff top to reach them, adding **2.1km/1.3 miles** to the walk route, or you can use the alternative route in the next paragraph adding **1.1km/0.7 miles** to the walk.

- For the **a) Alternative route via the Clifftop Cafe**, turn **left** after the footbridge. This path goes through woods on its climb up the cliff and so has less good views - though at the top it climbs a thrilling (but not vertiginous) zigzag grove up through vertical chalk cliffs. It is also a much wider and more distinct path and so less likely to get overgrown. For **Folkestone Circular walkers** this option shortens the walk to 12.9km/8 miles, versus 13.9km (8.6 miles) via the main walk route outlined above. *To do this option go to paragraph 36 overleaf.*

Direct route up the cliff (0.7km/0.4 miles)

32. Having turned **right** after the footbridge in paragraph 31, 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 now rises, now falls 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 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** without passing any further lunch options, *turn right* and refer to the paragraph 57 on page 7.
 - Dover walkers wanting to **backtrack to the Clifftop Cafe** or **Lighthouse Inn** for lunch should *turn left*. The Lighthouse Inn is in 800 metres and the Clifftop Cafe 250 metres beyond that. Return to this point after lunch to continue with paragraph 57 on page 7.
 - 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 109 on page 10

Route up the cliff via the Cliff Top Cafe (0.7km/0.4 mi)

36. Having turned **left** after the footbridge in paragraph 31, follow this path as it initially parallels the railway line climbing up and down
37. In 250 metres the path turns away from the railway into a wood and starts to climb the hill, occasionally on wooden steps.
38. In 200 metres more, at a clear fork in the path, fork right uphill (where the other path is level, then downhill)
39. The path now zigzags up a steep wooded slope, occasionally aided by wooden steps, and later with some (rather rickety) wooden railings.
40. After 500 metres or so it is climbing among cliff faces, at first in the wood and then gradually with more open views.
41. In another 400 metres you emerge onto the clifftop by the **Clifftop Cafe**
 - **For the main walk to Dover**, go past the Clifftop Cafe and then turn right beyond it, to join the clifftop path heading east (with the sea to your right). Continue with paragraph 54 on page 7.
 - **For the Folkestone Circular walk**, head west along the clifftop path (with the sea to your left) and continue with paragraph 110 on page 10 - unless you want to have lunch at the **Lighthouse Inn**, in which case go the other way along the clifftop path for 250 metres to find it on your left.

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

42. Having kept on the broad track in paragraph 21, in 70 metres, where the tennis courts end, keep along this seaward edge of a park.
43. 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.
44. In 250 metres, when you get to this top corner, follow a tarmac lane that diverges from the residential to your left. The lane leads uphill, towards a Martello Tower being converted into a house.

45. In 150 metres, where the road swings right just beyond the Martello Tower, carry straight on up a path. In 100 metres cross a high footbridge over a road and keep on uphill on the path.
46. Ignore any apparent minor side paths as you climb the hill: these lead nowhere. In 350 metres, more or less at the top of the hill, you come to a clear three-way footpath junction marked by a footpath sign. Here turn right, following the North Downs Way.
47. In 30 metres you come out onto the flat clifftop. Here veer left with the path along a chainlink fence, ignoring paths off to the right.
48. You should now be on a footpath following the edge of the clifftop, with the chainlink 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).
49. Keep to the seaward edge of the memorial for 250 metres, picking up a path through rougher grass near the clifftop edge when it ends. In 80 metres or so this starts to descend steps into a gully.
50. After descending for 60 metres and climbing for another 40 metres or so, you come out onto the driveway of a house. Turn left on this.
51. In 30 metres turn right up a footpath, the North Downs Way.
52. This path follows the edge of gardens along the cliff edge for 300 metres, before emerging into a grassy space. Follow paths along the edge of this, and through various rougher areas, to come in 400 metres to the **Clifftop Cafe**.
53. Pass to the landward edge of the cafe, ignoring a path slanting downhill on its seaward side, and follow the cliff top path.
54. In 250 metres the **Lighthouse Inn** is on your left. Beyond it, keep to the cliff top path.
55. In 650 metres the path runs between a caravan park left and the cliff edge right.
56. In another 150 metres, at the end of the caravan park a path from the Warren joins from the right (signposted, though this junction is easy to miss). 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 clifftop path** and continue with the directions in the next section.

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

57. In 70 metres the path goes into thorn bushes.
58. Emerging from the bushes in another 80 metres, it forks. The North Downs Way and Saxon Shore Way is the left fork but a more attractive route is the right fork, marked with a yellow arrow, which skirts just below the cliff top
59. In 70 metres a tube metal fence starts to the right (welcome, as the path is vertiginous at this point).
60. In 250 metres, where the fence ends, you are on a headland which is a fabulous **viewpoint** back along the Warren
61. 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 (**but be careful of the drop**: the slopes may be grassy but just as deadly if you fall down them: go further inland if in doubt)
62. In 70 metres you pass to the left of a concrete World War Two gun emplacement and veer left onto a wide tarmac path (the North Downs Way).
63. In 170 metres you pass a rare concrete **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*).
64. In 300 metres, at the top of the hill, the tarmac path goes through a gate, but ignore this and instead go right for 20 metres and then left through a kissing gate, following a North Downs Way sign. (You can stay on the seaward side of the fence on a clear path, but if you do this, take care of the cliff edge).
65. In 250 metres you pass around the end of a steep bank of earth and a round brick structure, and keep on with the fence (or the remains of it: it is quite decrepit at this point and absent for stretches) to your right (or left).

66. 200 metres or so beyond this point there is a kissing gate in what is left of the fence. Pass through this onto its seaward side (unless you are on that already), passing into a small area of bushes.
67. The path now carries on about 30 metres 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. If you do go to nearer the edge, you can see a broad platform at the bottom of the cliff, **Samphire Hoe**, which was the construction site for the Channel Tunnel in the late 1980s and partly constructed out of the spoil from the excavations.
68. Eventually, after several hundred metres, the main path comes closer to the edge, curving to the right of a fenced field, and you can see the Samphire Hoe more easily. At the eastern end of it, note the ventilation fans for the tunnel and a monument that marks the point where the tunnel heads out to sea. The circular areas, one of them now a car park, were the construction shafts for the tunnel (they dug downwards, then both inland and out to sea from this point)
69. The path goes into a section of thorn and gorse scrub, and at the far end there is **a particularly good World War II gun emplacement** (the first one you come to, almost covered by grass in summer, not the larger and more obvious one just beyond). You can go inside this one (*at your own risk!!*) and get an idea of what it must have been like to stand guard on this coast at that time. To do this, take the path to the right just before the emplacement, to find the entrance to the left just before the cliff edge.
70. After more gun emplacements over the next 250 metres, most of them now buried in the ground, you emerge onto a fine section of the cliff path, which follows an undulating ridge between valley and sea.
71. In 400 metres, at the top of a rise, the right of way goes through a kissing gate, then in another 80 metres turns right through another kissing gate. An unofficial path simply bypasses both gates by going to the right of the fence in the first place - *though **be warned**, in one place this gets **very** close to the cliff edge.*
72. Either way, after the second kissing gate carry on increasingly steeply downhill, with a fence now to your left.
73. At the bottom of the dip there is a brick chimney.
(This and two other brick chimneys you can see on the next section are old ventilation shafts built to let the smoke out from the trains in the tunnel of the Folkestone to Dover railway below.)
- There is a path to the left at this point through a kissing gate. To go down to **Samphire Hoe**, take this path. 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.
74. Otherwise stay on the cliff path, as it climbs gently with a fence to its left. To your right is **Shakespeare Cliff** (*so named because it is the presumed location of the cliff in King Lear*).
75. In 300 metres you are directed left through a kissing gate in the fence because the cliff path ahead is now closed due to erosion. Turn right immediately after the gate to resume your former direction, climbing gently with the fence now to your right.
76. In 600 metres you start to descend quite steeply. There used to be a good view of **Dover Harbour** ahead on the initial alignment of this path, but the new route goes through scrub for 100 metres or so, before emerging for a slightly less dramatic view (though in early 2018 some scrub clearance was going on here, so the view may be restored).
77. In another 100 metres pass through a kissing gate in a field corner and keep on downhill beyond it.
78. In 20 metres you come to a metal fence overlooking a beach and the railway line. Turn left here down a concrete path.

The beach below you was an important part of Dover's attractions before the railway sliced across it. The large building at its far end was the **Lord Warden Hotel**, a grand establishment for cross-channel ferry passengers. 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 the 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. This remained in use until the opening of the Channel Tunnel. Its long roof can still be made out to the right of the former Lord Warden Hotel. It is now used as a cruise ship terminal and a car park for cruise passengers.

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

79. In 200 metres the path curves right, parallel to a dual carriageway
80. In another 100 metres turn left down concrete steps into an underpass under the main road, following the North Downs Way sign.
81. At the far end of the underpass go right up steps and carry straight on down a road.
82. In 60 metres turn left up King Lear's Way, following a North Downs Way sign. In 30 metres go right onto Kings Ropewalk
83. 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.
84. Follow this path as it climbs uphill behind the houses and then in 70 metres turns right up steps. Ignore a kissing gate to the right halfway up, but at the top of the steps go right through a kissing gate onto a path that slants up across the hillside
85. In 250 metres you pass through a wooden gate (with a somewhat pointless kissing gate to its right) and carry straight on up the path.
86. In 170 metres more a wider path joins from the left and you carry on up this, with a fence covered with shrubs to your right.
87. In 250 metres you come to a road: merge with this and carry straight on. In 70 metres merge with a second road and carry on, now slightly downhill
88. In 100 metres you come to a road T-junction, where you go left.
 - If you wish you can follow this road all the way to the bottom of the hill, to a point in 550 metres where the road turns sharp right. Here 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.
89. 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).
90. 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.
91. At the top of the first set of steps, ignore a path to the right and curve left up a stepped path, keeping to the left of the wire fence, onto what is in fact the rampart of a **Napoleonic era fort**, though initially it is somewhat hidden by earthworks.
92. In 50 metres go through a kissing gate. 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.
93. 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.
94. 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**.*

95. 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. Just after this **slant left downhill, away from the fort**, following the England Coast Path arrow, heading for a gap in the bushes.
96. 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
97. Half way down the hill you pass through a kissing gate and carry on down steps that are now stone (and **slippery when wet**).
98. At the bottom of the steps carry on down a track.
99. In 100 metres, at a T-junction with a tarmac path, go right, following the North Downs Way sign.
100. In 20 metres merge with a road and curve left downhill on it. This brings you down to a dual carriageway, where you go left.
101. 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.
102. 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. In 80 metres a plaza opens out to the left. The **Dickens Corner** cafe is straight ahead on the far side of this, but your onward route is to veer left across the plaza and carry on up Dover's pedestrianised high street.
103. In 50 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.
104. In another 150 metres, just after a car road crosses from the right and ends the pedestrian section, **Costa Coffee** is on the right.
105. **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.

106. In 70 metres turn left to cross the road at traffic lights and on the far side turn left.
107. Carry on past the roundabout and to the right up Folkestone Road.
108. 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 option c) Folkestone Circular.

109. Having turned left along the cliff top in paragraph 35, in 800 metres you pass the **Lighthouse Inn**, a possible lunch stop on your right. In 250 metres more, you pass the **Clifftop Cafe** on the left.
110. Beyond the cafe veer left to the seaward side of a car park, to pick up a path that runs along the cliff edge
111. After 130 metres keep to the left-hand side of a fenced area on the cliff edge path. In 80 metres this fenced area ends but in 70 metres another starts, and soon there are gardens to your right.
112. In another 200 metres the path turns inland alongside a garden for 60 metres, and then turns left parallel to the coast and descends for 50 metres to a concrete drive.
113. Here go left, downhill, and in another 30 metres, before a house called **Eagle's Nest**, turn right again down steps into a dip and up the other side.
114. Once up on the clifftop again, in 70 metres fork left away from the fence to keep near the cliff edge. In 150 metres there is a monument to your right – the **Battle of Britain Memorial** (which has a seasonal cafe).
115. Keep to the cliff edge beyond the memorial until in 80 metres 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.
116. In 400 metres, at the end of the fenced compound, **turn right** with the path (ignoring a fork to the left 10 metres earlier) to descend 20 metres

to a three-way path junction. Here go **sharp left** downhill, leaving the North Downs Way.

117. 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.
118. 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.
119. In 130 metres, just before a road junction, veer slightly left across a green space to converge with its seaward edge in 300 metres and pass through a gap in a wooden fence into another green space. Keep to the left of this, and in 100 metres pass to the left of some tennis courts on a track.
120. Beyond the tennis courts leave the track (which is a dead end due to coastal erosion) and fork right up onto the grass to pass to the left of the white **Martello Tower**.
121. Beyond the tower veer right to walk downhill across the grass, heading to the left of a building ahead.
122. Beyond the building veer left onto the grassy shelf to the left of the road, and a tarmac path. 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.
123. At the bottom of the steps turn right on the promenade and follow it for along the top of the **harbour beach**.
124. In 300 metres you are forced to veer left, but in 40 metres you can turn right again onto the harbourside, Follow this for 200 metres until you pass under the left-hand of two railway arches.

To Folkestone station (2.1km/1.3 miles)

125. Beyond the arches go diagonally right, passing to the left of the Royal George pub, to come to a main road. Cross this and turn right, and then in 40 metres veer left up the narrow Old High Street.

126. In 150 metres the **Steep Street Coffee House**, a possible tea stop, is to the left.
127. In another 120 metres, at the top of Old High Street, keep straight on up some steps into George Lane, and in 50 metres curve right with the passage.
128. 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 uphill up another pedestrianised shopping street.
130. In 120 metres, there is a **Costa Coffee** outlet on your right. In another 80 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 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 25 metres go right, following a sign for A20 to Dover. In 250 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 clifftop esplanade that you walked along this morning. Follow this for 400 metres until you pass the glass-sided atrium to the **Leas Cliff Hall**, a possible tea stop. 50 metres beyond this, you see Castle Hill Avenue, the broad avenue with the central tree-lined park on your right.

Turn left onto this, and 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.