



a feast of fine architecture

Rochester, set on the banks of the River Medway, is an ideal place to start exploring the commercial, military and historical significance of the Saxon Shore Way.



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Location: Rochester

Distance: 3 miles (4.8 km)

Time: allow 1 hour 30 minutes

Explorer Map: 163

Terrain: urban pavements (take care crossing roads)

Stiles: 0

Parking: near civic centre or in public car parks

Refreshments and facilities: cafes, restaurants, public houses and bars throughout Rochester town centre

Public transport: for information about local bus and train services in Kent, contact Traveline tel: 0870 6082608, www.traveline.org.uk

Step count: approx 6000

 **Dog friendly**

Explore Rochester Castle and Cathedral, on a delightful circular walk through this ancient town's bustling streets. Look out for the many landmark buildings made famous in the novels of Charles Dickens.



Start on the riverfront where the remains of a Roman bridge were discovered in the 19th century. Many historians believe the Romans had several bridges spanning the river here – the lowest crossing point on the Medway. Today, the river is still very important to the local economy. Admire the dramatic river views from Rochester Bridge.

A short stroll leads to the towering remains of the Norman castle. It was one of the earliest stone castles to be built in England. Remnants of the town's Roman walls can be discovered in the stonework. The castle was built by Bishop Gundulph.

Equally awe-inspiring is Rochester Cathedral. The cathedral was founded in AD 604 by Bishop Justus. It is the second oldest in England and attracts thousands of visitors and pilgrims from across the world every year. Step inside and view the Gundulph Tower and crypt – the oldest part of the cathedral.

At Crow Lane, look out for Restoration House. This is an Elizabethan red brick house where Charles II stayed in 1660. It appears as Satis House, the home of Miss Haversham in Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations*.

Follow the Saxon Shore Way along East Row, across the recreation ground to Fort Pitt Hill. Turn towards the river again, crossing New Road Avenue, and down Hammond Hill to the High Street. Piers, wharves and warehouses along the riverfront indicate the commercial importance of this waterway. Follow the High Street into Eastgate and the historic heart of Rochester.

The Guildhall, with its magnificent moulded plaster ceilings, was built in 1687. The building is now the Rochester Museum.

Nearby, The Historic Dockyard at Chatham, gives visitors a unique insight into the local importance of shipbuilding and Medway's naval connections. Visit www.chdt.org.uk for further information.



look out for...

- Restoration House where Charles II stayed in 1660
- The Vines – a garden, originally a monastery vineyard, tucked away behind the cathedral
- La Providence – a square of almshouses founded to provide homes for French Protestants fleeing to England
- Roman and medieval remains of the city wall at Blue Boar Lane
- Rochester Bridge – dramatic views of the busy River Medway and beyond

Gundulf, consecrated Bishop of Rochester in 1077, was responsible for the building of the cathedral we see today and the first stone castle to defend the town and the River Medway. The castle's towering ragstone keep, the tallest in the country, was constructed in the early 12th century.

did you know?

Henry VIII is believed to have met Anne of Cleves for the first time in 1540 at Old Hall, Rochester.

The Synagogue, at Ship Lane near Hammond Hill, is the only one in England with its own graveyard.

Richard Dadd, a Victorian artist known for his fairy paintings, was tried at Rochester for the murder of his father.

Fort Pitt was the site of the principal military hospital in the early 19th century and was chosen by Florence Nightingale as the first Army Medical School.

Troy Town, a small area of Rochester just 500 metres from the historic centre, is named after a wealthy Georgian wine merchant and landowner, John Cazeneuve Troy. He made his home there and attracted other successful business people to live nearby.

For more walks including accessible heritage trails, visit www.fortifications.org



Start/Finish



ROCHESTER
DYROBRIVAE
ROMAN TOWN

ESPLANADE

BOLEYHILL

La Providence

The Vines

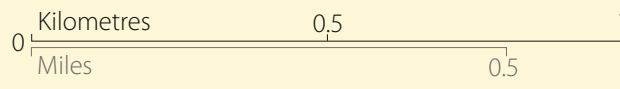
EASTROW

Leave your car at home
and catch the train

HAMMONDHILL

FORTPITHILL

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