

THE BEACH ROAMER

RAMSGATE TO MARGATE WALK

BOTANY, BAYS AND BEACHES

EK



A beautiful beach ramble from Active Ramsgate, taking in the best of the Isle of Thanet's coastline from the Royal Harbour of Ramsgate, right around the corner of the English coastline to the vibrant seaside town of Margate, home of Turner Contemporary. This route takes in some spectacular views across no less than nine bays, and stunning cliffs interspersed with wild flowers and vegetation – truly one of the most stunning walks in Kent.

“GETTING OUT IN THE FRESH AIR WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY AND MAKING THE MOST OF THE BEAUTIFUL COASTLINE AROUND RAMSGATE, WHAT COULD BE BETTER?”

LIZZY YARNOLD, OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL WINNER & ACTIVE RAMSGATE AMBASSADOR

LIFE'S A BEACH

The Beach Roamer – a gentle 6.8 mile (11km) walk that takes you from the hustle and bustle of Ramsgate's vibrant waterfront, Royal Harbour and marina, past secluded bays and wide open stretches of sand, to the seaside town of Margate. At low tide you can walk the entire trail along the sands!



BAYS AND BEACHES ALONG THE WAY

- Ramsgate Main Sands
- Dumpton Bay
- Louisa Bay
- Viking Bay at Broadstairs
- Stone Bay
- Joss Bay
- Kingsgate Bay
- Botany Bay
- Palm Bay
- Walpole Bay
- Margate Main Sands

*Check them out on
explorekent.org*

The Thanet coastline plays host to 15 sandy beaches and bays and with more Blue Flag awards* than any other area of the country, you know you're in for a real treat. What's most surprising is how much the beaches differ from each other.

There could not be a better beach to start out from than the wide expanse of Ramsgate Main Sands. This Blue Flag beach has a distinctly continental feel with its alfresco dining and amusements, surrounded by high chalk cliffs.

However, as you wind your way round the coastline the beaches become more secluded and the cliffs even more rugged and dramatic.

Whether you're looking for deckchairs to soak up the sun and boardwalk promenades, or rock pooling and fossil hunting among the caves where smugglers used to hide their contraband hundreds of years ago, this walk provides it all.

*The gold standard for clean beaches and water quality.

What you can be sure of is that you will feel as though you have been transported miles away, such is the tranquil nature of the sands. So as you walk along the shoreline with toes dipped into the water, or watch as surfers take to the water and ride the waves, you will feel the burden of everyday life simply melt away.

There's no need to rush – with plenty of beachside cafes, restaurants and bars along the route, you can stop for a bite to eat and drink whilst soaking up the atmosphere.

Beginning at the Royal Harbour of Ramsgate, you'll walk along Ramsgate Main Sands following the Thanet Coastal Path through nine bays, including the famous Viking Bay at Broadstairs and the surfer's paradise of Joss Bay, finally reaching Margate Main Sands. All beautiful and individual bays in their own right, with plenty of tales to tell if you know where to look.



INFORMATION

WALK OVERVIEW

RAMSGATE TO MARGATE

LOCATION:

Harbour Parade, Ramsgate,
CT11 8LN and Marine Terrace,
Margate, CT9 1XJ

DISTANCE:

6.8 miles (11km) linear walk -
allow 3.5 – 4 hours one way

TERRAIN:

Mainly surfaced paths and beach
walking. Steps allow access to
higher path at high tide. Some
moderate slopes

FACILITIES:

Shops, cafés, restaurants and
pubs in Ramsgate, Broadstairs
and Margate. There are also public
toilets and seasonal kiosks along
the route

TRANSPORT:

Traveline 0871 200 22 33
www.traveline.info (Thanet Loop);
National Rail Enquiries
03457 484950;
www.nationalrail.co.uk

Start as you mean to continue by setting an easy, relaxed pace and remember that this is a walk designed to be enjoyed, not rushed.

At Dumpton Bay and Stone Bay you can choose to walk along the beach instead of the cliff top path at low tide. Please be aware that at high tide you will need to follow the cliff top path. Check tide times in advance of your walk at: www.tidetimes.org.uk/ramsgate-tide-times or purchase from Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre.

www.tidetimes.org.uk/ramsgate-tide-times

① As you leave the Ramsgate Harbour area and the eclectic mix of restaurants, cafés and pubs overlooking the inner yacht marina, you will pass the Royal Victoria Pavilion and the Edwardian lift and head towards the blue building which is the boulevard kiosk. A small fun fair, offering merry-go-round, swing-boats and other old style fair rides, is set out on **Ramsgate Main Sands** in front of the kiosk and there is ample outdoor seating.



Continue along the promenade and you will see the offshore wind-farm busily generating green electricity out on the horizon. Soon another blue building, with another kiosk (seasonal) and public conveniences (open April to September, daily) will come into view. Stay on the

promenade but instead of following the road uphill, keep to the right, past a yellow and black metal vehicle barrier, and carry on along the sea wall.

② A little further on and Ramsgate's Sea Garden will come into view; a small garden inspired by the coastal environment that lies on the site of the old Marina swimming pool and boating lake. You might appreciate a small breather by now. There is an interpretation panel and a bench you can use to enjoy the view out across the sandy beach and the sea.

The sea-wall runs directly along the foot of white chalk cliffs at this point and approximately 200 metres further on you will reach a switch-back path up to the cliff-top.





At high tide, follow this route to continue the walk to Broadstairs. You can return to the beach or sea wall at **Dumpton Bay**. When the tide is low, you can continue along the sea wall for another 450 metres, before reaching a ramp that leads you down onto the sandy beach. This section of the walk offers you some truly stunning views of the Channel, with the imposing white cliffs on your left and the multitude of chalk rocks, worn smooth by the daily tides, strewn at the cliff's base. But remember that there is no sea-wall to escape to if you get caught out by the rising tide, so plan ahead.

➊ After approximately 630 metres, another ramp will lead you off the beach; up past a row of brightly coloured wooden beach huts and back on to the sea-wall at **Dumpton Bay**, where a seasonal kiosk serves refreshing hot and cold drinks, snacks and ice creams. Public toilets (including baby-change facilities) are also available here (seasonal).

Follow the sea-wall's final bend into Louisa Bay and you will be rewarded with some fantastic views of Broadstairs and a chance to walk along the beach at low tide from Dumpton Bay.

➋ Thanks to a series of steps that lead from the beach up to the sea-wall, you can quickly retreat to safety if the tide catches you by surprise. At the **Louisa Bay** cafe (seasonal) a ramp will lead you uphill, under the footbridge and onto a set of steps to the cliff top. Turn left at the top of the steps and you will enter Victoria Gardens, a circular park with a path you can follow in either direction towards the bandstand. There are toilets and baby change facilities here if you need them.

From here you can join the promenade, where there are more interpretation panels and benches you can use to rest and take in the view across **Viking Bay**. If you've

worked up an appetite, you can also stop off for a bite at the Charles Dickens pub, Royal Albion Hotel, Prezzo or Chiappini's (amongst others).

➌ Follow the path as it slopes down to the junction with Harbour Street, turn right and continue, downhill, past Wyatt and Jones, the Sun Terrace, Pavilion Gardens, and Tartar Frigate Public house. (There are more public toilets available here).

When you reach The Boathouse, bear left through the car park and pick up the promenade walk along the coast. Look up at Charles Dickens' Bleak House on the cliff top.



➍ At the end of the promenade at **Stone Bay** turn left and head up the steps running between the cliffs to the top (at low tide you can continue along the beach but do check tide times first as you do not want to get caught out). Turn right at the top along the footpath.

Continue straight ahead on the footpath through the field opposite. It can be a little muddy during the rains. Look out for the North Foreland Lighthouse, and follow the foot path round the field to **Joss Bay**.



7 A surfer's paradise, **Joss Bay** is a popular 200-metre long bay surrounded by fields and a golf course. The seasonal surf school on the beach hires boards and wet suits so you can take to the waves, and there is a seasonal beach shop, café, toilet and lifeguard patrol.

Joss Bay gets its name from Joss Snelling, the notorious local smuggler, who was born in 1741. He lived to 96 and in his time was once introduced to Princess Victoria in 1829 as 'The Famous Broadstairs Smuggler'.

Cross the road at the beach shop and turn right along the Viking Coastal Trail.

At the junction with the road, cross the road again and turn left. There is no footpath at this point for 100 metres. Head downhill to **Kingsgate Bay**. Look out for some fine examples of caves and arch formations in the white cliffs. There is a great view here of the Kingsgate Castle which was built in 1760.

Head past the Captain Digby pub and take the sharp right along the Viking Coastal Trail. The pathway follows the edge of the car park and then alongside the golf course with a ruined flint tower fort then coming in to view at White Ness Point.

8 From White Ness Point, follow the trail along the cliff top past **Botany Bay**. There are lots of benches along the way. As you approach Long Nose Spit you may see boats out at sea dredging for aggregates and sand. Turn left just before the Spit and follow the trail through **Palm Bay**, past the Jet Ski World Cafe and onto **Walpole Bay**, with its sea bathing pool. Turn left at the Lido and follow the road around it, returning again to the Viking Coastal Trail immediately after.

Continue past the Winter Gardens until you arrive at the Turner Contemporary Gallery (Where you will find the Visitor information Centre), Pier and Harbour in Margate.

Margate Old Town is across the road from the Turner Contemporary or you can head down to Margate Sands and explore the assortment of sea-side shops and arcades, along with Dreamland.

9 You have now conquered the most south-easterly Corner of England. Well done!

To return to Ramsgate you can either catch the train from Margate railway station (it's along the sea front just past Dreamland) or take the Thanet Loop bus service from Cecil Square (just off the seafront).





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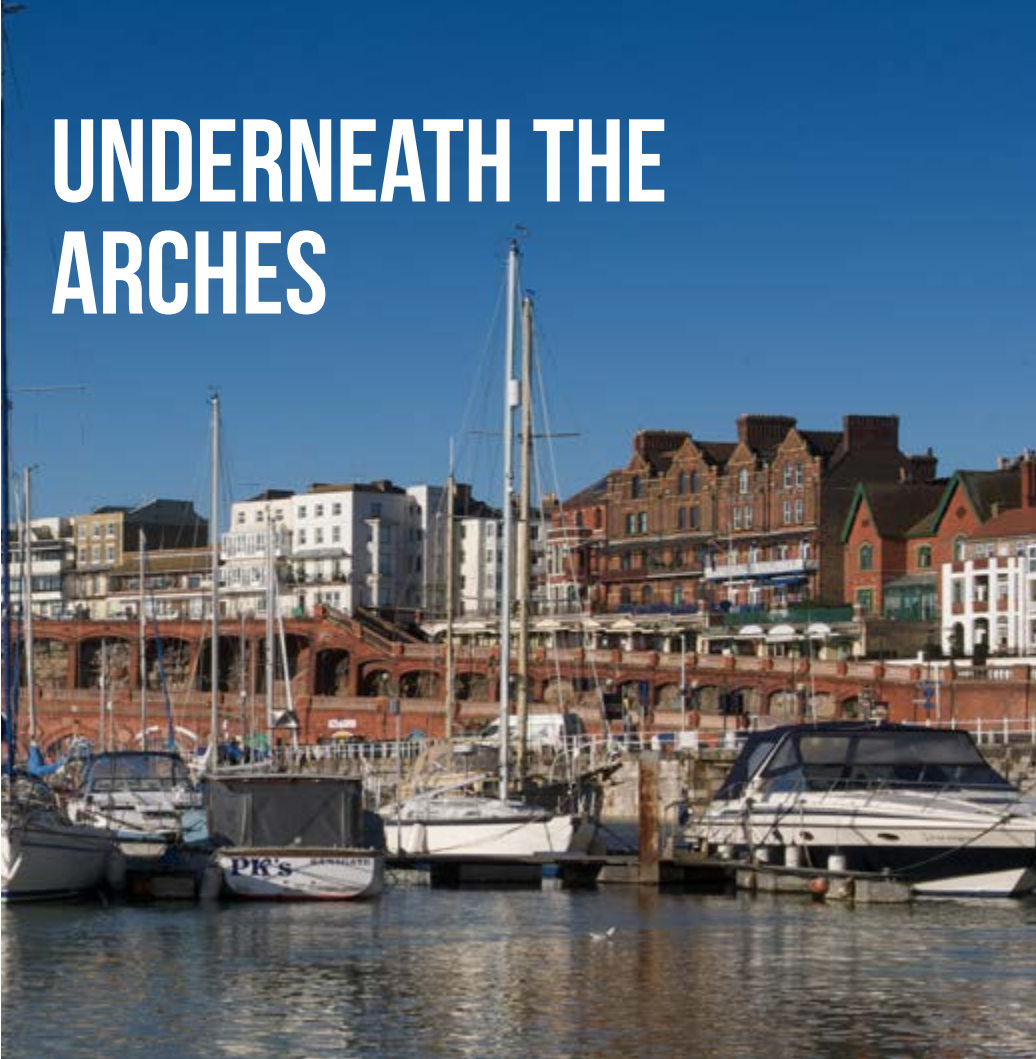
TRANSPORT: Traveline 0871 200 22 33
www.traveline.info (Thanet Loop); National Rail Enquiries 03457 484950; www.nationalrail.co.uk

TIDE: Please check tide times before setting out to ensure you do not get cut off. www.tidetimes.org.uk/ramsgate-tide-times

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UNDERNEATH THE ARCHES

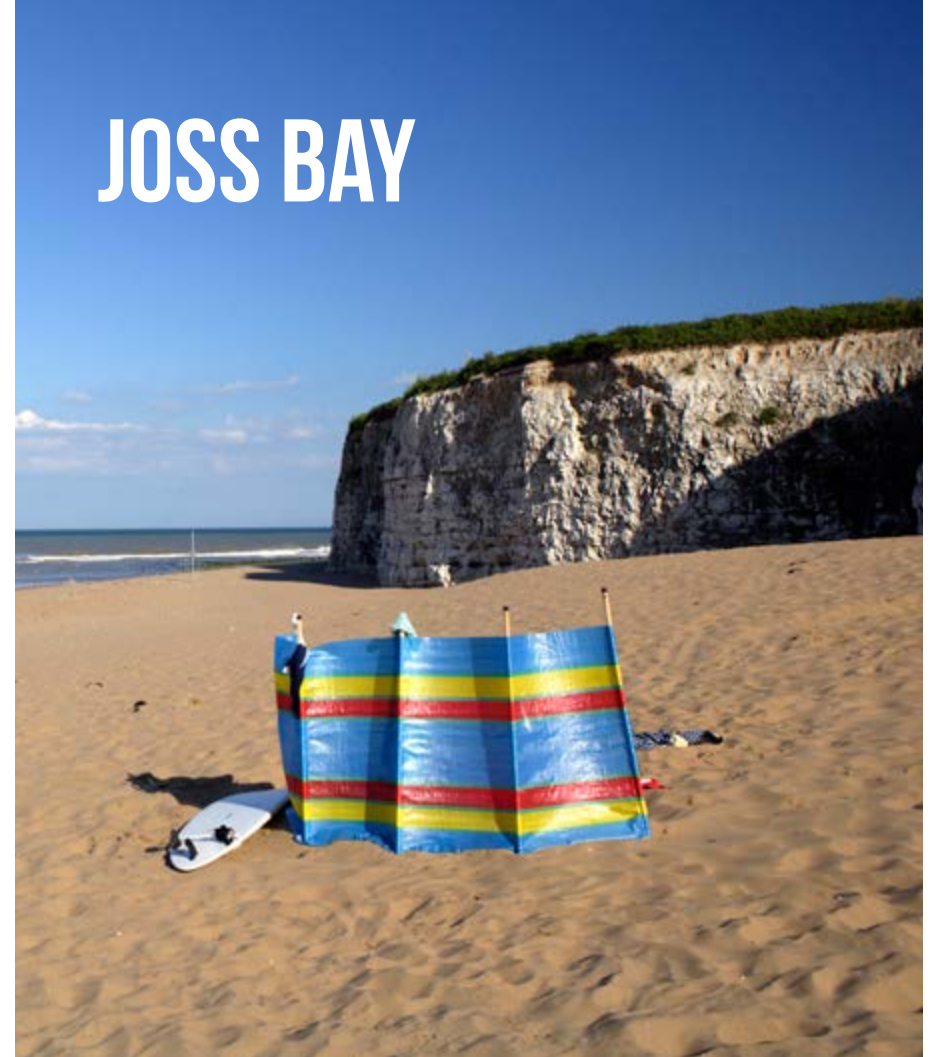


You can't fail to see the Arches when looking across the waterfront at Ramsgate's Royal Harbour. Historically, they were home to various maritime businesses, but now each arch is home to a local business, which range from vintage shops and art galleries to cafes and bars.

The **Arch Bar** is very popular with visitors and locals, its locally sourced food and array of continental wines perfect to satisfy the most discerning of palates.

The '**Something Fishy – The Little Arch Gallery**' is a quaint little art gallery featuring the ceramics and sculptures of local artist Suzy Curtis, together with works from other local artists, photographs, gifts and greeting cards.

JOSS BAY



Joss Bay is a 200-metre long picturesque bay, best known today for its surfing. There's a surf school on the beach which hires out wet suits and boards, so don't worry if you haven't come prepared! There's also a seasonal beach shop and café on the sands, and you can hire deckchairs and loungers, all you need for a day out.

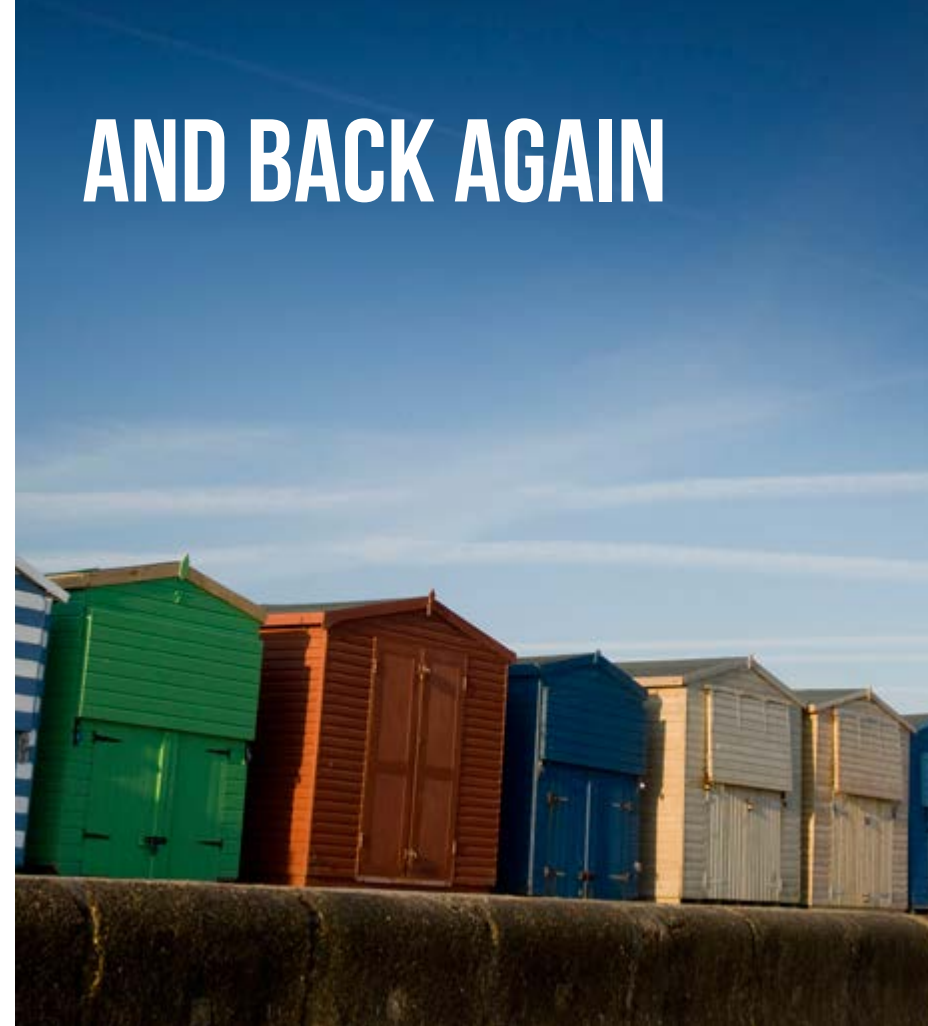
Joss Bay was named after the notorious Broadstairs smuggler Joss Snelling who was rumoured to operate in the area in the 18th and 19th centuries.



BOTANY GALORE

Ramsgate and the surrounding area is home to some of the most important habitats in the UK, including cliffs and chalk grassland, as well as reefs, caves and sandy bays – did you know, for example, there are over 100 types of seaweed found along the Thanet coastline, some of which can't be found anywhere else in the world? This is because it has the longest continuous stretch of coastal chalk in Britain. It supports a variety of flora and fauna of national importance that have learnt to adapt to the harsh environment of strong salt laden winds, including plant communities which live on the rocky chalk reefs. There are also communities of shingle plants that can be found in the area too.

Plants that survive well in the coastline environment include those that have thick waxy leaves to survive the harsh winds, and those that have small curled leaves to reduce water loss. Species that you should be able to see on your walk are Sea Beet, Sea Purslane, Fennel, Wormwood and wallflowers such as the Red Valerian. You'll also most likely come across Rock Sea Lavender, Rock Samphire and Yucca, so keep an eye out. If you spot all of these species, you're doing well!



AND BACK AGAIN

It's a long old walk this one, but if you are made of strong stuff you can simply retrace your steps the way you came to return to Ramsgate Royal Harbour. With plenty of stunning vistas and a diversity of flora and fauna, there's plenty to experience and enjoy that you may have missed on your way out. You'll feel like you're walking this route for the very first time, you certainly won't suffer from *déjà vu*!

However, for many, public transport will be your route home. You can either take the train from Margate station back to Ramsgate or catch the Thanet Loop bus service just off Margate Main Sands which will take you straight back to Ramsgate Royal Harbour in no time at all.

For more information about Ramsgate and all the local area has to offer, you can pop into the Visitor Information Centres where the local staff will be happy to help.

Ramsgate Visitor Information Centre

The Custom House, Harbour Parade, Ramsgate CT11 8LP

01843 598750

Open 10am - 4pm

Thanet Visitor Information Centre

For more things to do and places to stay in Ramsgate, Broadstairs and Margate. Droit House, Stone Pier, Margate CT9 1JD

01843 577577

visitthanet.co.uk

Open 10am - 5pm

Broadstairs Information Kiosk

Victoria Parade, Broadstairs

Open 10am - 4pm seasonally

For more things to do and places to stay in Kent, the Garden of England, go to visitkent.co.uk

KENT
GARDEN of ENGLAND

For more walks in Kent use the excellent
Explore Kent website explorekent.org



KENT GREETERS

Want a bit of individual attention?

Kent Greeters are a band of helpful and passionate volunteers that are ready and waiting to share the local area they know and love so well. As well as taking you on a short 2 – 4 hour personalised walk, greeters will introduce you to the local highlights, hidden gems and everything else that makes up their day-to-day world. The service is created to be as helpful and fun as possible, totally free and available to groups of up to six people.

Visit their website for more details:

KentGreeters.co.uk

OBSERVE THE THANET COASTAL CODES

Your enjoyment of the coast will be enhanced by keeping to the Coastal Codes. Staying safe, looking out for other coastal users and protecting precious habitats and birdlife is the basis for the Coastal Codes. Leaving the coast how you find it or how you would expect to find it is the best way of keeping to these Codes. Remember to check tide times before you travel and advise someone of your route. More information can be found at thanetcoast.org.uk/factfile/thanet-coastal-codes

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