

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

HOO PENINSULAR TRAIL

4.5 MILES (7.24KM)



EXPLOREKENT.ORG

The Hoo Peninsula juts into the Thames Estuary from the North Kent coast. On one side is the River Thames, the other the Medway. Despite being only 30 miles downriver from London, this peninsula feels like another world. Often overlooked for the charms of Rochester or the north Kent beach towns of Whitstable and Margate, its riches are there to be discovered.

OVERVIEW

LOCATION: ME2 4XE Upnor, Kent

DISTANCE: 4.5m (7.24km)

EXPLORER MAP: 148

ACCESSIBILITY: Sections of this route can be slippery due to seaweed.

Be prepared – check the tides before setting off on this walk as one section is only accessible at low tide. Tide Times Upnor | easytide.admiralty.co.uk

PARKING: Pay and display car park at Upnor Castle

REFRESHMENTS AND FACILITIES: The Tudor Rose and Kings Arms public houses are located near the start.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: For public transport information visit kentconnected.org

ROUTE DESCRIPTION

- 1 Upnor High Street** From your starting point you can wander along Upnor High Street, a traditional cobbled street sloping gently downhill towards the river. Most of the houses date from the 17th and 18th centuries. You will also pass the Tudor Rose pub with its seats made from upturned rowing boats. To your left is the entrance to Upnor Castle, an English Heritage site. Travel back to your original starting point and turn right to follow the King Charles III England Coast Path (KCIII ECP) with a high wall on your right. Go down some concrete steps, turn right and walk past a boatyard to stop opposite The Ship Pub.



Visit the traditional cobbled Upnor High Street

- 2 The Ship Tavern** This is a good spot to stop and consider the changing face of the river. Gaze right from here and you can see the tall masts and cranes of a boatyard. Fishing boats, motorboats, dredgers, tub boats and dinghies all testify how our use of the River Medway has changed from work and industry to pleasure and leisure. Continue walking with the river on your right. When you reach the Pier pub follow the path across a grassy area towards some boats. Stop by two stone obelisks in front of the Arethusa Venture Centre.

- 3 The London Stones** From the 13th century onwards the City of London was awarded the rights to fish as far as the lower reaches of the Thames and into the Medway. These boundary stones mark the southern limit of their fishing boats.

The next section of the walk is only accessible at low tide. Walk along the top of the beach passing the Medway Yacht club. Keep your eye out for a Second World War pillbox on the shore. Stop when you reach a wall of red bricks and arches on your left.



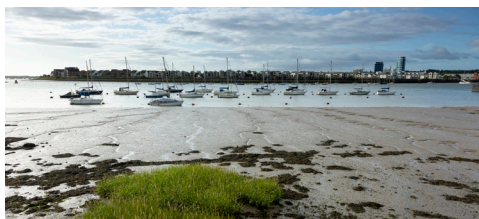
View of Upnor Castle from the River Medway

- 4 Cockham Wood Fort** This red brick wall on the shore of the Medway is gradually being eroded by the tide. Closer to the river's edge see if you can spot a line of red bricks overgrown with moss. Now a rather unassuming relic, these were once an important part of the country's defences. In 1669 an artillery fort known as Cockham Wood was built here. The archways you can see are the remains of a gun platform where 44 guns pointed out into the river. Continue ahead along the riverside path until you reach Hoo Marina.

- 5 Hoo Marina** Keep following the signs for the KCIII ECP and walk through the Hoo Marina park, an estate of prefabricated houses. This area then emerges into Hoo Marina business park. Follow the path through the business park to emerge at Vicarage Lane.

- 6 View of St Werburgh Church** Turn left and follow the footpath alongside the field towards the house of Hoo St Werburgh and the church spire. Before you reach the church turn left onto Saxon Shore Way. This is signposted for KCIII ECP and Saxon Shore Way. Continue ahead on the well-marked track.

- 7 Saxon Shore Way** The Saxon Shore Way runs 163 miles from Gravesend to Hastings. It traces the coast of Southeast England as it was in Roman times around 1,500 years ago. Follow the track straight ahead, passing a farm and buildings, keep in the same direction until the footpath becomes an alley between backs of houses. Emerging at a road of suburban houses then follow the Saxon Shore Way signposts left. Follow the path downhill through woods to emerge at the London Stones. Turn right and retrace your steps back towards Upnor Castle and car park.



View of the mudflats and boats on the River Medway

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<https://explorekent.org/activities/great-expectations-hoo-peninsula-trail/>
https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/england-coast-path-south-east/
Photography: John Miller

