

# WALK WALMER CASTLE TO SANDOWN CASTLE



With the sea to your right, head north along the coast from Walmer Castle via Deal Castle to the remains of Sandown Castle. These three fortifications formed the backbone of a defensive line built by Henry VIII to protect this vulnerable coastline.

The route takes in the atmospheric streets of the old town of Deal, and other buildings and places linked to the rich maritime history of the east Kent coast.

## ROUTE GUIDE:

- **Distance:** 5.7mi (9.2km) there and back, following the coast path on the return. About 2hrs. Deal Castle 1.3mi (2.2km).
- **Terrain:** Hard paths and pavements on level terrain. Some kerbs and narrow pavements may not be suitable for wheelchairs or wide pushchairs. Short flight of shallow steps at Sandown Castle.
- **Dog walking:** This route is suitable for dog walking.
- **Parking:** Free parking for English Heritage Members at Walmer Castle and Deal Castle (limited to 3hrs at Deal). Free parking at Kingsdown Road. Public car parks in Deal. Limited on-road free parking at Sandown Castle.
- **Access:** See English Heritage website for opening hours for Walmer Castle and Deal Castle. Coast path and Sandown Castle accessible any time: [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)



Historic buildings in the centre of Deal.



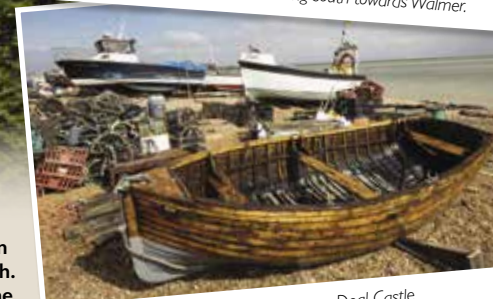
The Sandown Castle Community Garden. It was begun in 2015 on the site of Sandown Castle and is maintained by volunteers.



ENGLISH HERITAGE



Aerial view of Deal Castle, built by Henry VIII in 1539–40, looking south towards Walmer.



Fishing boats on the beach near Deal Castle.

The original village of Deal (now Upper Deal) developed in medieval times about a mile from the sea. The town grew up on the coast from the mid 16th century, behind a long shingle beach. Its emergence was in response to the growing importance of the Downs, a safe anchorage nearby, used by ships of many countries during their often-perilous maritime journeys.

To protect the Downs, and the adjacent beach that was vulnerable to enemy landings, from the threat of a French–Spanish invasion, Henry VIII built defences along the coast. Completed in 1539–40, these comprised three powerful artillery castles at Walmer, Deal and Sandown, linked by a continuous earthwork barrier, along which were placed four additional gun forts ('bulwarks') of earth and timber.

Deal grew rapidly, prospering in the service of hundreds of ships in the Downs, and by providing skilled local pilots who were able to navigate the dangerous waters offshore. The town flourished in the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries: a naval yard servicing Royal Navy ships functioned from 1672 until 1864, and huge barracks were built in the 1790s during the war with France.

But prosperity was not always achieved by legal means: Deal was a notorious smugglers' lair. Organised and often-violent gangs were audacious in pursuing their illicit trade, and were widely supported by local people, until finally brought to heel by the Coast Blockade Service and the Coast Guard in the mid 19th century.

Thereafter, the Downs anchorage declined in importance and tourism emerged, which continues today. The route from Walmer via Deal to Sandown retains a fine legacy of historic buildings against a dramatic coastline, illustrating its rich maritime story.

'This place is famous for the road for shipping ... where almost all ships which arrive from foreign parts for London, or go from London to foreign parts ... generally stop.'

Daniel Defoe, 1724



Sandown Castle before it was demolished by the War Office in 1863 following coastal erosion.

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## WALK WALMER CASTLE TO SANDOWN CASTLE

Leave **Walmer Castle** via the driveway and cross Kingsdown Road to take the footpath to the car park **1**.

Cross the car park and take the short paved path towards the beach and onto the **coast path 2**.

Turn left and follow the path northwards. After 485m, the **path bends to the right and then to the left 3**. Continue following the path north for another 340m, past the walled gardens on the left. After another 120m take the **hard path** on the left heading away from the sea **4**.

At the end of the path cross the road (The Beach) and continue straight on along **Cambridge Road 5**.

After 40m cross Liverpool Road and continue on Cambridge Road. At the end, opposite the **Jubilee Gates 6**, turn right onto Dover Road.

Follow Dover Road to the **junction with Canada Road 7** and turn right. Cross The Beach and go straight along the path to rejoin the coast path at the **Downs Sailing Club 8**.

Turn left and continue north along the coast path for 670m, passing RNLI Walmer Lifeboat Station and the Deal Memorial Bandstand on the left. Before reaching Deal Castle, look for a **path on the left crossing the grass verge 9**.

Turn right on Marine Road and follow the pavement as it bends to the left.

Continue along Marine Road to the **junction with The Strand 10**. Turn right and follow the pavement north to the entrance to **Deal Castle 11**.

Continue north following the pavement past Deal Castle and round the corner to the right into Deal Castle Road. Before the pavement runs out, cross Deal Castle Road (watching for traffic) to the opposite pavement and continue right, following the pavement towards the sea. Follow the pavement around the corner to the left and cross the road at the **crossing 12** to rejoin the coast path. Turn left to follow it north along the seafront.

Continue north along the seafront for 760m, passing Deal Timeball Tower on your left and Deal Pier on your right. Keep left of the concrete barriers and pass to the left of the Royal Hotel. Just after the Royal Hotel, turn left, crossing the road (Beach Street) to go down **Oak Street 13**.

After 60m cross Middle Street and continue straight on along Oak Street. At the junction with High Street, opposite the **Town Hall 14**, turn right and follow High Street north for 140m. Turn right down **Farrier Street 15** and at the crossroads turn left onto Middle Street. Follow Middle Street north for 235m.

Turn right down **North Street 16**. At the end, cross the road (The Marina) and rejoin the coast path, turn left and continue north for 11km to reach the site of **Sandown Castle 17**.

Retrace your steps or follow the coast path south to return to Walmer Castle.



Deal South Barracks, begun in 1795, was a Royal Marines depot from 1869 until 1996. The Jubilee Gates date from 1887, the 50th year of Queen Victoria's reign.



Sandown Castle  
Community Garden



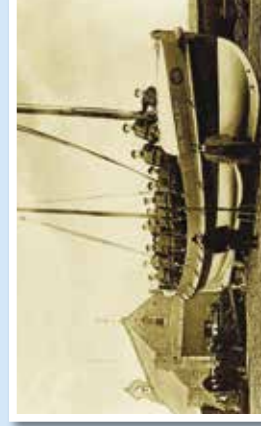
Deal Town Hall dates from 1803. Earl Granville, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, installed the drinking fountain in 1875.

### DEAL TIMEBALL TOWER

The tower was completed in 1821 for semaphore messaging between London and the Royal Navy dockyard at Deal. In 1855 a time ball on a mast was placed on top of the tower. At exactly 1pm, the ball slid down the mast, allowing ships offshore to correct their clocks.



Deal Memorial Bandstand commemorates 11 Royal Marines musicians, killed by an IRA bomb at Deal Barracks, 22 September 1989.



The RNLI Walmer lifeboat and crew in the 1890s. The station was built in 1871, and extended in 1992 and 2009.

### SHIPWRECKS

In the past, the Downs, offshore from Deal, was used as a safe anchorage in good weather. In stormy conditions, however, ships were often blown onto the shoals of the Goodwin Sands, 6 miles offshore, where it is thought 2,000 or more have been wrecked.



Detail from Rescue on the Goodwin Sands by the North Deal Lifeboat, by Edward William Cooke (1811-80).

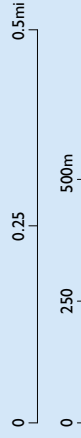
### MIDDLE STREET

This charming, narrow street in the old town of Lower Deal was established by the mid 17th century, and has many 18th- and 19th-century buildings. The town developed to serve the needs of ships, travellers and merchants.



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