

Pier to Pier Cycle Trail

Ramsgate to Deal

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**active
Ramsgate**
get active, be inspired

Pier to Pier Cycle Trail

There's a lot more to cycling than simply keeping your head down and clocking up the miles, or at least there is on the Pier to Pier Cycle Trail.



This beautifully designed introduction to some of the South East coast's most striking architecture, history and nature begins in Ramsgate, the only Royal Harbour to be honoured by a visiting king, where you will leave from the East Pier and pick up the cycle-friendly Viking Coastal Trail to Pegwell Bay. From there you will follow National Cycle Network Route 1 until you arrive at the beautifully preserved medieval town of Sandwich. Then it's onwards again,

along the ancient highway (toll free for cyclists) meandering through the most magnificent sand dune habitat to your halfway point at Deal Pier. The route covers 20km and should take more or less 90 minutes to complete, depending of course on the speed you cycle! But remember that it isn't a race, so take your foot off the pedal, and give yourself a moment to appreciate everything that makes this trail so exceptional.

Fabulous Feasts & Famous Feats

The Pier to Pier Cycle Trail is an opportunity to do so much more than simply cycle from a to b; it's an invitation to experience a truly exceptional journey. So, start as you mean to continue and allow the hustle and bustle of Ramsgate's Royal Harbour to wash over you.



If you're hungry, put away your sad, cling-filmed sandwiches and see what's on offer at any one of Ramsgate's busy waterfront cafés, pubs and restaurants where you can enjoy the continental vibe and fuel yourself up.

Then, properly fed and watered, you can begin; past the elegant marina; up onto the cliff top; over the honeycombed network of caves and tunnels that are buried deep in the chalk and rock beneath your wheels; beside the



English Channel that has seen armadas defeated, battles won and invasions repelled; journey through a national nature reserve teeming with spectacular birdlife; meander alongside the River Stour through the medieval town of Sandwich; pedal the ancient highway at Sandwich Bay passing sand dunes and golf courses galore; on and on until you have enjoyed every moment of every mile of this beautiful trail and arrive at the pier in the picturesque coastal town of Deal.



A Brief History of the Brief Life of Ramsgate Pier



The existing concrete 'East Pier' harbour arm was, rather briefly, complemented by a largely wooden pier that officially opened on 31st July 1881. This was an immediate success and a number of extra facilities including a switchback railway, camera obscura, joy-wheel, angling and a 250-seat pavilion on the pier-head were soon added to the attraction.



However, despite this outside investment and popular support, the company behind the project hit hard times, and three short years later they auctioned the pier for just £250.

If that wasn't a big enough blow, a series of violent storms hit the pier in 1887, forcing the removal of the popular switchback railway and, despite all subsequent efforts to breathe new life into the venture, the pier itself closed in 1914.

In 1917, a fire caused even more damage, but the last nail in the coffin arrived a year later. It came in the form of a mine which exploded underneath the structure. The damage was terminal, and in 1930 the Ministry

of Transport decided to finally and irreversibly demolish what little remained of the unlucky pier.

Happily the story didn't end there though, because the current 'East Pier' harbour arm formed part of the construction of Ramsgate Harbour and was made of much tougher stuff. Unlike its blighted wooden counterpart, the concrete East Pier has weathered everything that time, and the forces of nature have thrown at it and remains one of the town's most popular attractions. Whether you want easy access to sea fishing, a delicious meal in the harbour arm's Brasserie, or a boat trip to see the area's wildlife, Ramsgate's East Pier is 'the' pier to visit.

Start/Finish: East Pier, Harbour Parade, The Harbour, Ramsgate CT11 8LS

Route: Along Regional Route 15 and NCN Route 1 from Ramsgate to Deal

Distance: 12.9 miles / 20.8 km to half-way point (Deal Pier);
25.8 miles / 41.6 km round trip

Time: Allow 90 mins (one-way)

OS Explorer Map: 150

Terrain: Mainly on dedicated cycle paths, bridleways and country lanes

Refreshments & facilities: Restaurants, cafés, pubs and public toilets in Ramsgate, Sandwich and Deal

Car Parks: Ramsgate Royal Harbour, Leopold Street, Ramsgate CT11 9EF;
Pier Yard, Harbour Parade, Ramsgate CT11 8LS

Train Stations: Ramsgate, Sandwich, Deal

Tread Easy

If you're worried about the demands that this trail will make on your bike, relax, because the good news is that the Pier to Pier Cycle Trail has been designed to be as forgiving as possible. The route is almost entirely on a dedicated cycle path and the surface is generally sound so, regardless of the type of bike you have, you can cycle with confidence. And while you will encounter a few roads en route, the time you will need to travel on them is short and the traffic light.

Cycle Hire

Nestled amongst some great watering holes, Harbour Bikes is based out of one of the Arches in Ramsgate's Royal

Harbour. Along with cycle hire they can also service and repair your own bike if needed whilst you have a pit stop in one of Ramsgate's eclectic mix of waterfront cafés, bars and restaurants.

Harbour Bikes

www.harbourbikes.co.uk

07834 377907

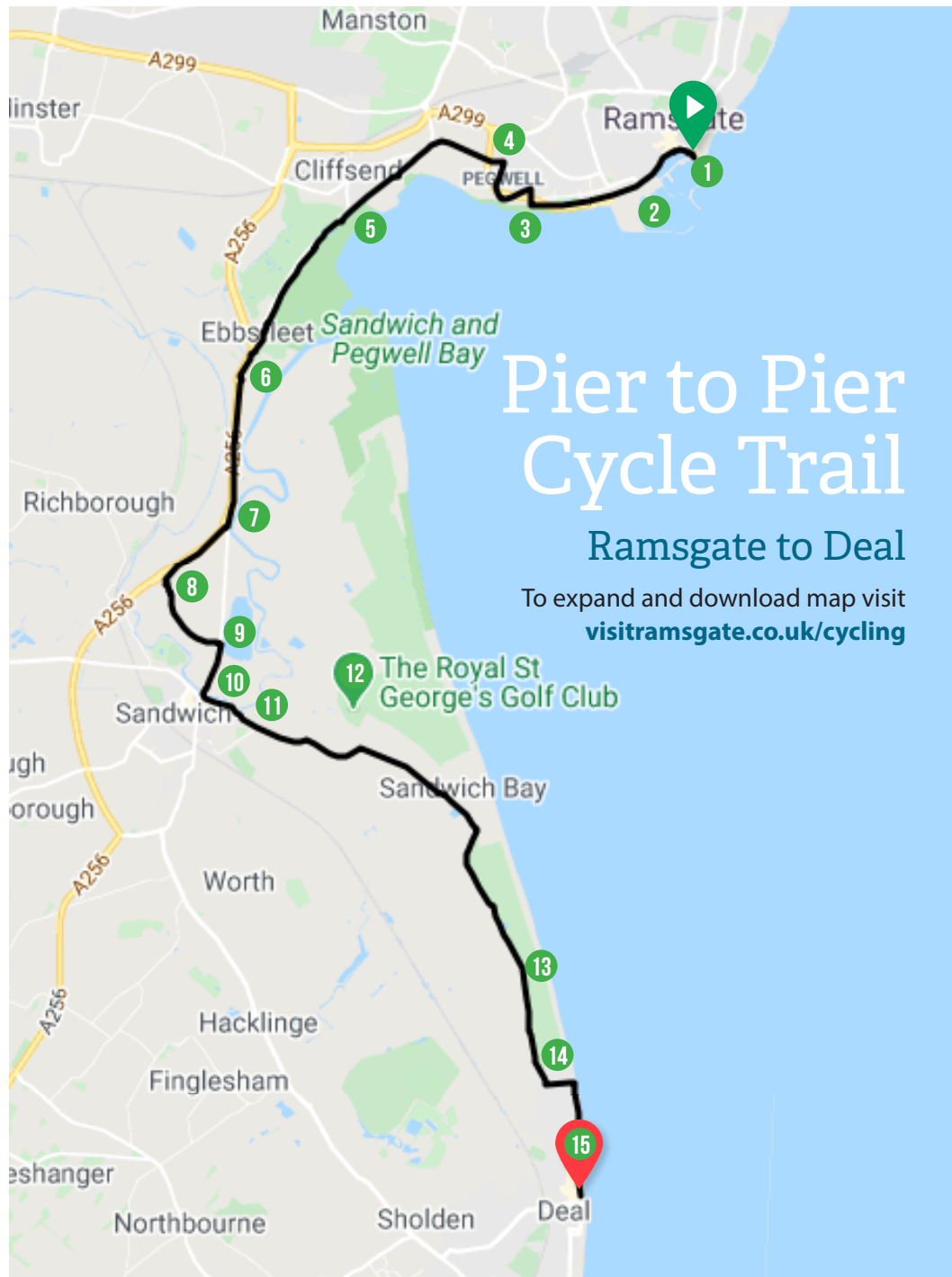
Good Practice makes Perfect

Sharing is Caring - On shared cycle paths give priority and slow down when approaching walkers and other cyclists. Dismount where signs advise. Try to stay to one side of the cycle path.

Respect the Environment -

Don't litter. There's no excuse. Ever. If you take it out, take it home.





Pier to Pier Cycle Trail

Ramsgate to Deal

To expand and download map visit
visitramsgate.co.uk/cycling



From Ramsgate's East Pier alongside the Royal Victoria Pavilion and the beach in the heart of Ramsgate **1**, cycle along Harbour Parade. (Public toilets located adjacent to the Pavillion).

At the junction turn left onto the Viking Coastal Trail. Cycle across the roundabout (2nd exit) and up the hill on the cycle path running alongside Ramsgate Royal Harbour and Marina.

The Viking Coastal Trail

Vikings invaded here, Romans, Saints and Saxons landed here, artists and writers drew inspiration here. Now you're being invited here to discover why. At 32 mile (51.4 km), the Viking Coastal Trail boasts a wealth of dramatic scenery and historical gems for you to discover and enjoy, including an authentic Gokstad Viking ship named Hugin on the Cliffsend beach path. The route is also known as the Regional Cycle Network 15 and well signed throughout with the trail logo and the National Cycle Network.

At the sharp bend in the road to the right at the top of the hill **2**, cycle straight on forwards along the Viking Coastal Trail onto Westcliff Promenade passing Royal Crescent, St Augustine's Church, the Grange, Ramsgate Croquet Club, Ramsgate Bowls Club and the Boating Pool with the sea on your left.

St Augustine's Church

The personal passion and ultimate resting place of Pugin; renowned nineteenth-century architect, designer and reformer. Principally remembered for his pioneering role in the Gothic Revival style of architecture, Pugin began work on St Augustine's Roman Catholic church in 1846. He didn't live to see it completed, but his sons did, and thanks to them it quickly earned its place as a jewel in the Pugin legacy.

Turn sharp right at the end of the promenade leading up to Goodwin Road. Turn immediately sharp left onto Pegwell Road **3** and cycle downhill past Belle Vue Tavern on the left and Pegwell Bay Hotel on the right.

Cycle uphill turning sharp left opposite the Chilton Tavern following the Viking Coastal Trail along Chalk Hill **4**.

Cycle past the Viking Ship and take the left fork in the cycle path **5** towards Sandwich on the Contra Trail



(a walking trail that's part of Active Ramsgate's 'Active8') passing through wetlands with St Augustine's Golf Club on your right.

St Augustine's Golf Club

Part of Active Ramsgate's 'Active8' this compact and competitive golf course is worth 18 holes of anyone's time. St Augustine's beautifully maintained and highly manicured parkland course is home to an abundance of wildlife and welcomes visitors of all abilities. Club house, complete with 19th hole, also available.



Keep on the cycle path passing through Sandwich and Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve and Pegwell Bay Country Park (*public toilets and the Salty Seal Cafe are located here*) **6**, continue on the pavement and cycle straight past the roundabout and the petrol station bearing left just after, following the cycle path along Ramsgate Road towards Sandwich **7**.



Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve

Believed to be the site of both Roman invasions of Britain by Julius Caesar, Pegwell Bay is a shallow inlet in the English Channel coast with a wealth of historical interest and natural beauty. Mudflats and salt marsh with migrating waders and wildfowl are just a few of the attractions that make this such a must-see destination.

Continue forwards on the cycle path passing alongside the River Stour where the cycle path bears to the right to cross over the next

roundabout whilst staying on the cycle path, signposted towards Sandwich.

Immediately before the next roundabout bear left, then right (the cycle path crosses over the road) to head over the roundabout bypassing Pfizer and heading along the left fork of the cycle path **8** towards Sandwich circling around Discovery Park.

At roundabout take the last exit, cross over the road on the cycle path, and follow the cycle path alongside Ramsgate Road into **9** Sandwich.

At next roundabout join the road and cross the bridge over the River Stour and turn immediately left alongside the quay in Sandwich **10**.



A Bite Sized Introduction to Sandwich

Sandwich town is famously celebrated as being the birthplace of the bread-enclosed convenience food, but did you know that it also boasts a history that stretches back as far as 664AD? Nestled beside the River Stour, which



was once large enough to deal with trading ships and the not so occasional invasion, Sandwich is a beautifully preserved medieval town with an historic Quay and a very long memory.

In 1457, during a ferocious attempt by the French to invade, many of the townspeople were killed, including the town mayor. Time has healed those wounds, towns have been twinned and the assault has been forgiven. But it has not been forgotten, because every Mayor of Sandwich is still required to wear a black robe in memory. Elegant, interesting and surrounded by beautiful Kent countryside, Sandwich deserves its reputation as being something special.

Keep cycling alongside the River Stour, crossing through the car park, picking up the cycle path again. Turn left at the end into Sandown Road **11** and continue on into Guildford Road crossing through the toll point (free for cyclists) into Sandwich Bay Private Estate and onward along the ancient highway from Sandwich to Deal amidst sand dunes.



Sand Dunes

The most important sand dune system and sandy coastal grassland in South East England with a wide range of other habitats such as mudflats, saltmarsh, chalk cliffs and freshwater grazing marsh. The vegetation is extremely diverse and includes several rare species, such as fragrant evening-primrose, bedstraw, broomrape and sand catchfly, and the UK's largest population of lizard orchid.

Continue forward through fields with the beach at Sandwich Bay, Royal St George's Golf Club **12** and Restharrow Dunes Nature Reserve on your left and Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory on your right.

Royal St George's Golf Club

Founded in 1887, Royal St George's has earned the respect of some of the biggest names in golf, including Greg Norman and Sandy Lyle - and Ian Fleming, who used it as a template for the fictional Royal St Mark's Golf Club in his novel Goldfinger. The club has hosted 15 Open Championships, the most recent being the 149th Open in July 2021. Renowned for

having the world's deepest bunker in championship golf, Royal St George's is reassuringly unlike any other.

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory

The dedicated and ongoing conservation and recording of the natural environment in the Sandwich Bay area and the creation of opportunities for education, training and research make this observatory well worth a visit. Officially opened in September 2002 by the charity's President, Bill Oddie, it contributes towards the management of the Sandwich Bay Nature Reserve and plays a major role in documenting the bird-life of the estuary.



Continue along Golf Road **13**, cycling alongside Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club with the sea on your left.

Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club

Boasting a history that includes two Open Championships in 1909 and 1920, this 18 hole Championship

Links golf course is regarded by many as one of the finest in the world. Recently the club hosted the Amateur Championship in 2013 and was one of four Final Open Qualifying venues from 2014 to 2017.

When the road meets Ethelbert Road on a bend, bear left **14**. At the end of the road turn right.

Turn left into Godwyn Road and at the end of this road at the seafront in Deal turn right.

Cycle along the seafront on The Marina and Beach Street until you reach Deal Pier on your left in the heart of historic Deal **15**.



The Real Deal

Established as a 'limb' of the Cinque Ports in 1278, Deal was once renowned for being the busiest port in England. Today, the success of that port has been replaced by a thriving arts community and growing live music scene. The town is closer to Calais than London and France is clearly visible on a good day, so as you approach the end of your outward journey, consider using the break as an opportunity to explore its pastel-coloured houses,

Tudor castle, picturesque views and last, but not least, Deal Pier.

Like its unfortunate counterpart in Ramsgate, Deal Pier has also experienced more than its fair share of bad luck and drama over the years. From its first beginnings in 1838 to its reworked form today, Deal Pier has weathered the storms and remains one of the town's most important and loved landmarks. Park the bike and take a stroll down the pier to the new look cafe-bar designed by renowned architects Niall McLaughlin; the perfect place to enjoy a snack before you step back into the saddle and enjoy this exceptional cycle trail back to Ramsgate from a totally fresh perspective.

After a break, reverse the route and cycle back to Ramsgate. Alternatively you could take the train back.



ACTIVE8

Cycling is just one of the 8 outdoor leisure activities known as the 'Active8' brought to you by Active Ramsgate. Whether it's heart thumpingly good cycle trails (complete with optional cycle hire), uplifting walking trails, gorgeous golf courses, top tennis matches (or pickleball), breathtaking birdwatching tours, seal watching on kayaks, sunrise and sunset paddleboard safaris or open water kitesurfing - Active8 exceeds expectations at every turn. And if that isn't enough to tempt you, perhaps the wide range of local activity enterprises who have teamed up with us might.

Don't miss out on what they offer.

Visit visitramsgate.co.uk/active8 for full details.

For more information about Ramsgate and all the local area has to offer, you can pop into the Visitor Information Centre 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

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