

# Town Rounders

Regency, Royal & Riviera


Ramsgate Town Walk

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Walking doesn't have to be all compasses and yomps across the countryside. In fact, with a little imagination and the right routes, a stroll through an historic town like Ramsgate can be just as satisfying. With two walking loops, numerous attractions and an impressive list of cafés, bars, shops and places of interest to explore, Town Rounders is definitely a path worth following with a Riviera vibe.

"I'm a Londoner, so the dream weekend is a train to the coast to walk and bike and soak in seaside culture. Ramsgate's got the lot."

Nicholas Crane  
Presenter of the BBC Coast series



# One walk. Two loops. Countless surprises.

Is Ramsgate the perfect place to go for a seaside jolly, some fresh air and the best chips in the land? (Peter's Fish Bar was officially awarded the title in 2012.) Well, yes - and a whole lot more besides, because Ramsgate has grown from a humble 13th century fishing hamlet to become one of the

21st century's most interesting and historically rich UK harbour towns.

It has elegant regency architecture, beautifully positioned leafy squares and a stunning marina! In other words, there's more to see than you might expect, which is

why this walk has been broken down into two loops, each with its own distinctive take on the town. Enjoy every new discovery, have fun and don't forget to keep an eye out for the many cafés, shops and bars you can call into on the way.



# Loop the Loop

Loop 1 of this town walk begins with a gentle stroll down Harbour Parade past the yacht marina where you can pull up a chair at a local café and let the sights and sounds of this busy modern day Riviera wash over you. Follow the route beyond the wonderful array of boats old and new, big and small, expensive and... more expensive... and you will soon discover a wealth of local history right at your feet.

The old Royal Harbour, originally built in response to the Great Storm of 1703 (the worst disaster

to befall the Royal Navy in peacetime) is a truly remarkable piece of local history that continues to play an important role in the area. It has been honoured by kings (Ramsgate is the only Royal harbour in Britain) and shaped by seismic events such as the Napoleonic war when it became a busy garrison town, with tens of thousands of troops embarking and disembarking through the harbour. It was also the first town to be hit by Zeppelin air raids in WW1 and played a key role in the rescue of troops from Dunkirk in WW2.

Loop 2 also begins beside the marina but quickly leads away from the harbour to introduce you to a very different world. On this route, you will pass elegant regency town houses, including the homes of Vincent Van Gogh and John-Gibson Lockhart and historically rich buildings like St Augustine's Abbey (one of just four Benedictine monasteries in Great Britain) and the Gothic church designed by the famous Gothic Revivalist architect Augustus Welby Pugin. You will relax in a beautiful town park, walk through picturesque,

leafy squares and discover a whole new way of looking at an old historic town.

Both loops have been designed to give you a sense of what makes Ramsgate such an interesting and worthwhile town to explore. And both routes enjoy the support of a variety of local businesses, cafes and restaurants perfect for walkers!

*Enjoy it all!*

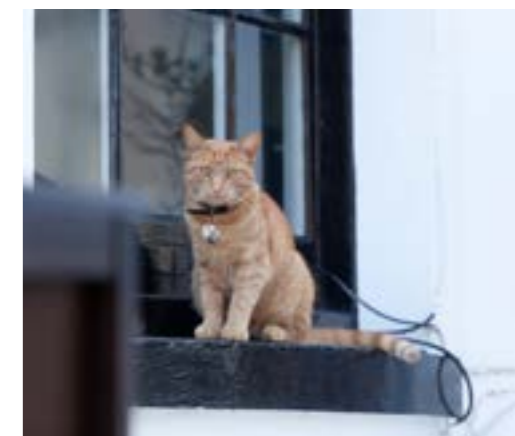
# Van Gogh's Impressions of Ramsgate

The list of well known people who have lived and worked in Ramsgate over the years is surprisingly long and includes Brenda Blethyn, Francis Austen, Elizabeth Fry, Edward Heath, John Le Mesurier, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Queen Victoria and a young up and coming Dutch painter called Vincent Van Gogh. In 1876, Vincent worked as a supply teacher at 6 Royal Road and boarded at 11 Spencer Square where he made a number of sketches of the view from his lodgings overlooking the harbour and wrote a series of letters to his brother Theo. This is what he had to say on the 6th May 1876:

“It’s already Saturday evening again; the weather’s beautiful today: the sea is very calm and it’s low tide at the moment. The sky is a delicate whitish blue with a haze in the distance. Early this morning it was also beautiful, everything was clear, where now it’s more or less hazy. This town has something very singular; one notices the sea in everything....”

These are really happy days, the ones I’m spending here, day after day, and yet it’s a happiness and peacefulness that I don’t trust entirely, though one thing can lead to another.

A person isn’t easily satisfied, one moment he finds things far too good and the next he’s not satisfied enough. But I’m saying this by the by, we would do better not to talk about it, but rather continue quietly on our way....”





Jacob's Ladder

# Step lively

Believed to have been the favoured means of access to and from the harbour for gold coin smugglers in a rush, Jacob's Ladder, originally a series of

wooden steps that led down to west pier, was designed and built by skilled carpenter, Jacob Steed in 1754. Now stone, the 'ladder' remains an impressive feat of

construction and can be found on Loop 1, just beyond the Sailor's Church, another attraction that deserves more than a passing glance.

## The lighthouse that moved

When the decision to build a lighthouse at the edge of West pier was taken, no one anticipated just how often or hard it would be struck by errant yardarms of vessels entering the harbour. But it

was. So often and so hard, in fact, that in 1842 the radical decision was taken to move the entire lighthouse and rebuild it in its current position, safely out of yardarms' way.





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# Step by step guide

## Walk overview:

**Location:** Harbour Parade, Ramsgate, CT118LN

**Distance:** Loop 1 - 1.4 miles (2.3km) - allow 45 minutes; Loop 2 - 2 miles (3.2km) - allow 1 hour

**Terrain:** Mainly pavements with road crossings  
Open Quayside (no barriers)

**Facilities:** Shops, cafés, restaurants, pubs and public toilets along the walk

**Transport:** Traveline 0871 200 22 33  
www.traveline.info

## Loop 1

**1** Loop 1 begins outside the Pizza Express restaurant opposite Yacht Marina. Make your way from here along Harbour Parade towards the Clock Tower where two important WW2 operations launched from Ramsgate are commemorated. Directly beside the Tower you will find a building made from a converted shipping container that features some brilliant artwork of a tumultuous sea, and an old Steam Tug called 'Cervia' that was part of a restoration project by the Ramsgate Maritime Museum.

**2** Continue past an amenities block for the Marina (no public access) and head towards a small wooden building. Now walk across the bridge adjacent to this building and over the channel between the Marina and Royal Harbour. You will soon pass a yacht hoist used for lifting boats in and out of the harbour and see the RNLi station to the left hand side. Please note that the quayside is open around this loop (no barriers) so do take care of children and dogs.

**3** Keep on towards a large red buoy on the quayside, past another amenities block with an interpretation panel (but no public access) and follow the West Pier out to the lighthouse where, on a clear weather day, there are excellent views out towards the headland at St. Margaret's and back towards Pegwell Bay. You'll find a number of benches located around the base of the lighthouse that also offer some great views across the harbour to the town.

**4** When you are ready to continue, retrace the route back to the red buoy but carry straight on towards the Sailor's Church. Turn right as you exit the marina gates and on the side of the church you will see a blue plaque that commemorates the contribution of HMS Ferret to WW2.

**5** Loop 1 has a final treat for you. Snuggled in the arches beneath Royal Parade there are a number of places to stop for a rest including 'Ship Shape', a small café with a delicious selection of drinks and food you can enjoy in a highly original and atmospheric setting.

## Loop 2

**6** Ready to begin Loop 2? Then cross the road opposite Harveys pub and make your way up York Street, past Corby's Tea Rooms until you reach the T-junction and turn right into Queen Street. (There are some public toilets at the end of an alley immediately to your left, if you need them).

**7** Approach the next junction with Lloyds bank on your left hand side and turn into the High Street (signposted towards the post office and railway station). After 180 metres, you will turn left again into George

Street, opposite Natwest Bank and the China Garden restaurant. Keep going for another 120 metres until you see a post box mounted in the wall on your right hand side and turn into Guildford Lawn where you will be greeted by a fabulous terrace of Regency houses.

**8** Follow the curve of the road and you will eventually emerge opposite the Public Library; a magnificent building that was restored after a serious fire in 2004. The stunning new stained-glass window you see today was produced by a local artist and incorporated designs from local schoolchildren.

**9** Your next turn will lead you right into Clarendon Gardens where you will continue to follow the road to its junction with Elms Avenue. You'll know you're on the right track when you see the Almshouses of the Parish of St George to your right.

**10** Follow the boundary of Clarendon House Grammar School and use the pelican crossing to cross over to Beresford Road on the right-hand side. At the end of Beresford Road turn left into Vale Square and walk towards the fenced park/shared garden that's

*"Every inch of Kent's coast is a leisure destination, whether it's walking, cycling, climbing or more adventurous sports like windsurfing, sailing, water skiing, there is something for everyone on Kent's coast."*

Sam Brearey, National, European and World Sailing Champion





directly ahead of you on the right-hand side. Now turn right and, keeping the park to the left (you are still in Vale Square), make your way down this leafy lane towards the spire of Christchurch Church. Turn left past the front of the church, following Vale Square round which will bring you to back on yourself to a junction with Vale Court. Turn right here and head towards the Artillery Arms pub on the opposite side of West Cliff Road.

**11** Continue over West Cliff Road into Royal Road and head towards the prominent sign for the Trafalgar Hotel painted on the side of a tall building. You might want to pause for a while to enjoy everything Spencer Square has to offer at this point. As well as the historic terraced houses overlooking the square there is a small park (with plenty of benches for weary walkers), a couple of tennis courts, and two blue, circular plaques commemorating the homes of Vincent Van Gogh (1876) and local author and editor, John-Gibson Lockhart, (who was also the son-in-law of the author, Sir Walter Scott).

**12** Cross over into St Augustine's Road and pass the Regency Hotel on your left shortly before reaching the historic St Augustine's Abbey and Gothic church designed by Pugin; to the right-hand and left-hand side of the road respectively. Both of these historic buildings

are easily recognisable by their flint-stone construction. A little further on and you will turn left, pass the public conveniences (with baby-change and disabled facilities) and head towards West Cliff Promenade and the Lookout kiosk where you can grab a well-deserved drink or snack, choose a bench and enjoy some fabulous views across the Western Ferry Terminal to the Royal Harbour.

There are plenty more opportunities to sit on a bench and take in the view, as you bear left onto the West Cliff promenade and continue back towards the Harbour.

**13** As you pass the Churchill Tavern, the promenade runs alongside the road and, approximately 165 metres on from the pub, cross over the road to enter Nelson Crescent. Now follow the road into Prospect Terrace until you reach the Foy Boat public house and bear left into Liverpool Lawn - famous for its Regency style houses and named after Earl Liverpool, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and Prime Minister 1812- 1827.

**14** Walk on a little further, keeping the 'Lawn' on your right, until you turn into a smaller lane and Adelaide Gardens. From here you will emerge at a T-junction opposite a house with a blue plaque that records the birth place of Sir William Jordan, the New

Zealand High Commissioner. Turn left and then almost immediately right into Albert Street and make your way towards some modern apartments. Turn left into Grundy's Hill and you will see Waitrose supermarket at the bottom of the hill on the opposite side of Queen Street. Take the right turning into Queen Street and continue for approximately 175 metres, crossing over Cliff Street, Princes Street and Leopold Street en-route. Follow the fourth turn on your right, into York Street and after approximately 30 metres you will reach Charlottes Court, a small alley on your left situated directly opposite the Sunrise Café.

**15** Follow Charlottes Court past a selection of pubs including Age & Son, The Horse and Groom and The Harbour Street Bar until you exit opposite The Village Grill where you will turn right into Harbour Street, follow the road back down to the Yacht Marina and end the walk right back where it began; outside The Royal public house where you can celebrate your success with a glass of your favourite tippie.



# 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: [www.kentgreeters.co.uk](http://www.kentgreeters.co.uk)



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**  
[www.visitthanet.co.uk](http://www.visitthanet.co.uk)  
Open 10am - 5pm

## KENT GARDEN of ENGLAND

For more things to do and places to stay in Kent, the Garden of England, go to [www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk)

For more walks in Kent use the excellent Explore Kent website [www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent](http://www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent)  
Download the Explore Kent App and follow this walk on your smartphone.



This document is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages.  
Tel: 0300 333 5540



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[www.ramsgatetown.org](http://www.ramsgatetown.org)

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