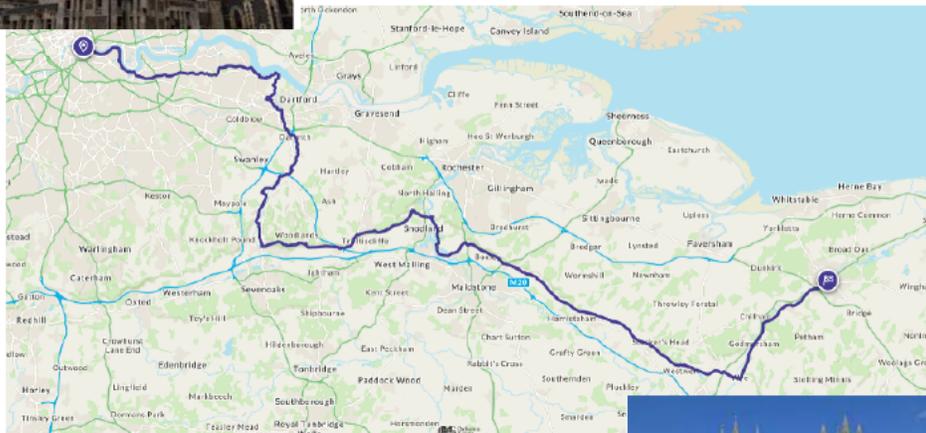


# FRANCIGENA BRITANNICA

## An extension to the Via Francigena from London to Canterbury



### Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome

Spring 2022



## Introduction

This CPR draft guide is based on a route conceived by Brian Mooney and Carlo Laurenzi, and tested over many days.. It follows existing and well waymarked routes as far as possible. It is likely that revisions will be suggested and implemented over the coming years, as with many of the preceding walking routes. For example, once the bridge over the Darent, close to Dartford is completed, the route will be amended to cut out a long detour.

A final version of the guide is expected in 2023, and will provide more options and variants, whether following the North Downs Way from Otford all the way to Canterbury or sticking to the valley route along the Pilgrims Way. We believe our recommended route makes more sense for the long-distance walker, especially one carrying a heavy backpack.

The CPR route knits together a number of established and well waymarked paths:

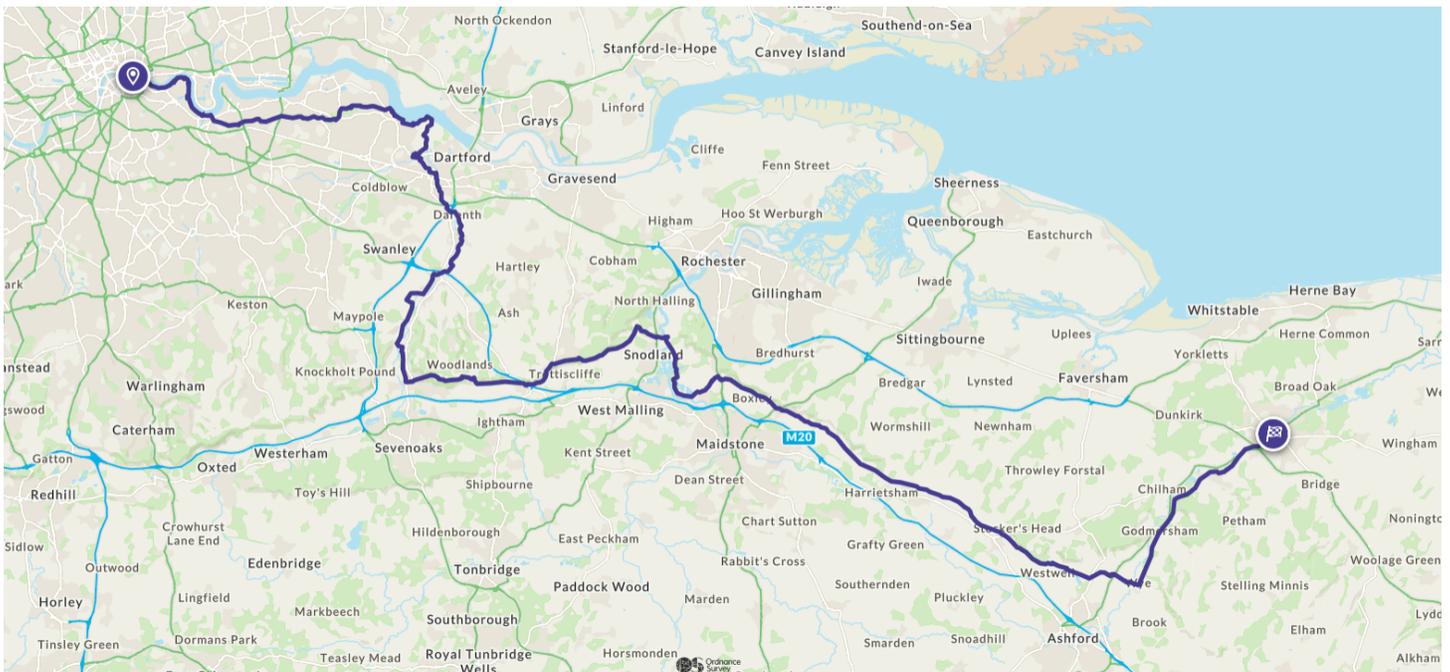
- Thames Path
- Green Chain Walk
- Darent Valley Walk
- Pilgrims Way
- North Downs Way
- Medway River Walk
- Stour Valley Way

We welcome your feedback once you've walked part or all of what we hope will become known as the Francigena Britannica.

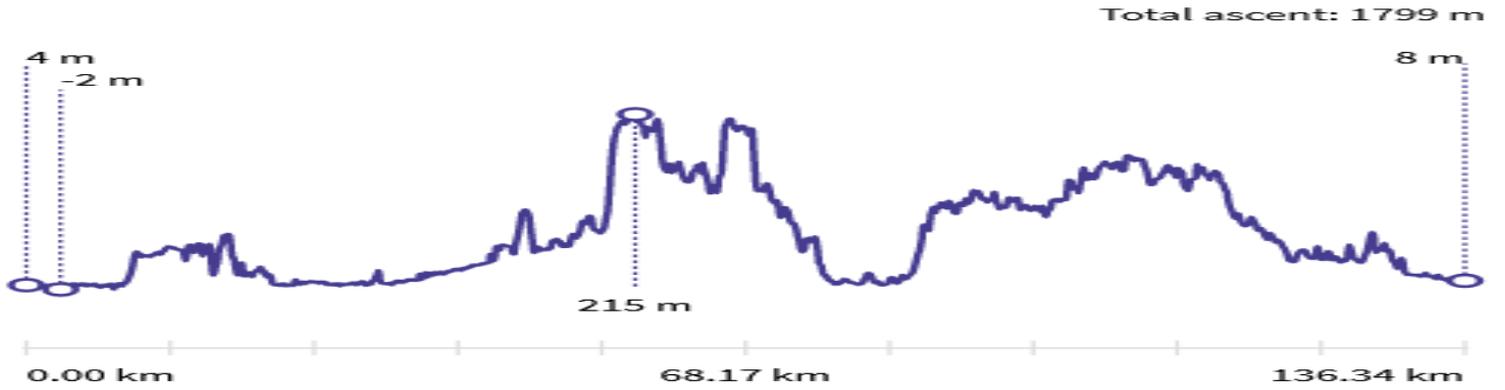


## Route

Location	Miles from Southwark	Miles from previous stop
Southwark Cathedral	start	start
Greenwich	9.6km/6 miles	9.6km/6 miles
Dartford	38.6km/24 miles	28.9km/18 miles
Otford	57.9km/36 miles	19.3km/12 miles
Peter's Bridge	82km/51 miles	24.1km/15 miles
Hollingbourne	101km/63 miles	19.3km/12 miles
Boughton Lees	22km/76 miles	20.9km/13 miles
Wye	127km/79 miles	4.8/km/3 miles
Canterbury	146.4km/91 miles	19.3km/12 miles



### Elevation



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## KEY

LOCAL CHURCHES

ACCOMMODATION

SITES OF INTEREST

AMENITIES

## Southwark Cathedral

Leave the Cathedral grounds onto Cathedral Street, head right and follow Montague Close around the northern edge of the cathedral and under London Bridge, merging into Tooley Street. Turn left at St Olaf House hospital along a footpath that will bring you out onto the Thames riverbank. This is the start of the Thames Path - turn right, heading east.



The Thames Path is waymarked throughout, and will be followed eastwards all the way into Greenwich.

**AMENITIES:** 100m along from St Olaf House is Hays Galleria, where there are public toilets and free WiFi access.

**TRANSPORT LINK:** London Bridge Railway Station is also located close by, at the other end of Hays Galleria.

Passing Hays Galleria on your right, continue along the riverbank towards Tower Bridge. The Tower of London can be viewed on the opposite bank of the river, as well as HMS Belfast. Passing under Tower Bridge, the path will follow a street called Shad Thames. In the 19th century Shad Thames included the largest warehouse complex in London, housing huge quantities of tea, coffee, spices and other commodities which



*Tower Bridge*

were unloaded and loaded onto river boats. Look up and spot the metal bridges connecting the buildings on either side of the street - these were originally used to roll barrels between the warehouses.

Following the Thames Path waymarking, turn left down Maggie Blake's Cause and back onto the waterfront. Continue east, crossing the footbridge at St Saviour's Dock. This is the point where the subterranean River Neckinger enters the Thames. Be aware of waymarkings as the path now merges onto Mill Street/Bermondsey Wall West.



*Maggie Blake's Cause*

**LOCAL CHURCHES: Most Holy Trinity (RC)** This church has claims to be the oldest mission in the Archdiocese of Southwark, having been established in 1773. Today's post-war building has particularly striking polychrome brickwork.

Turn right at East Lane and then left onto Chambers Street. Take the next left up Loftie Street then immediately right onto Bermondsey Wall East.

There are a number of places to access the Thames waterfront, but be aware new private developments may block this at certain points.

Continue to follow Bermondsey Wall East - you will eventually come to a pub called The Angel, where the Thames Path becomes a footpath again to cross King's Stairs Gardens.

### **LOCAL CHURCHES:**

#### **St Peter & the Guardian Angels (RC)**

**St Mary's Rotherhithe (CofE).** Christians have worshipped at the site of St Mary's for at least 1000 years, with the current church building completed in 1716 by an associate of Sir Christopher Wren. It has strong links with the Mayflower and the Pilgrim Fathers, as is the burial site of Prince Lee Boo, a Pacific Island prince buried there in the 18th century.

**ACCOMMODATION:** YHA London Thameside (£), 20 Salter Road, Rotherhithe SE16 5PR

Continue east along King's Stairs Close and Rotherhithe Street, crossing the red Bascule Bridge. Turn immediately left and back onto a footpath along the waterfront. There are a couple of points where private developments block the waterfront, and the Thames Path diverts onto a road for a few metres. Keep an eye on waymarkings.

**AMENITIES:** As you continue east around the Rotherhithe peninsula, there are a number of places to take a break if you turn off the Thames Path footpath and onto the parallel Rotherhithe Street. This includes shops, pubs and cafés. In particular, there is a large retail complex at the western end of Greenland Dock, including a large Tesco with public toilets.

**TRANSPORT LINK:** Access to Surrey Quays overground station from this complex.

After passing the large Greenland Dock (on your left as you are now heading south), the Thames Path continues straight, turning right at Pepys Park. Cross Millard Road and continue through Lower Pepys Park, emerging onto Grove Street. Turn left and continue straight on until Sayes Court Park. Look out for the waymarking that will direct you left into the park, emerging onto Sayes Court Street. Take the next left down Prince Street, turning right just past The Dog and Bell pub onto Watergate Street. Follow the road (and waymarking) around into Borthwick Street and continue onto a footpath at the end of that road which leads you left past the Ahoy Centre and out onto Glaisher Street. Turn right. The Thames Path now follows the riverfront again.

**LOCAL CHURCHES:** St Nicholas (CofE). Legend has it that the Jolly Roger pirate flag was based on the skulls of the gateposts of St Nicholas's church.



*The Cutty Sark*

You can choose to cross Deptford Creek at the first footbridge (Greenwich Reach Swing Bridge) and continue on the Thames Path to the Cutty Sark, or cross on the main road (Creek Road) and head directly for Greenwich Park. If you opt for the footbridge, cross and turn left onto Dreadnought Walk, continuing to follow the waterfront on the Thames Path to the Cutty Sark in Greenwich. If you cross on Creek Road continue down Creek Road, turning right at the end, then left into Stockwell Street, and left again into Nevada St to enter Greenwich Park at St Mary's Gate.

**TRANSPORT LINK: Stop here for the Cutty Sark DLR (Docklands Light Railway) Station, Greenwich Pier, or the entrance to Greenwich Foot Tunnel.**

## Greenwich

### LOCAL CHURCHES

**Chapel of Ss Peter and Paul (CofE)** Part of the Old Royal Naval College, and still an active place of worship. Open daily 10am-5pm.

**Our Lady Star of the Sea (RC)**

**St Alfege (CofE)**

There are several options through Greenwich town centre to reach Greenwich Park: the simplest is to stand facing south with the Cutty Sark on your right and follow King William Walk to the St Mary's Gate entrance. Continue past St Mary's Gate up The Avenue. Greenwich Observatory will be on your right (worth a detour for the panoramic view of London). At the crossroads/roundabout turn left onto Great Cross Avenue. This begins as a small car park but soon becomes a wide pedestrian-only avenue. You will pass a bandstand on your right. Eventually several paths will converge and there will be a gated flower garden on your right. Proceed with the flower garden on your right and exit the park onto Maze Hill. Cross the road and take Vanbrugh Park straight ahead



*Royal Observatory Greenwich*

### **LOCAL CHURCHES: St John's Blackheath (CofE)**

Follow Vanbrugh Park, taking care not to curve left into Beaconsfield Road where the pavements merge, but continuing east until a large roundabout (the Royal Standard pub will be on your right). Turn left and cross at the zebra crossing (onto the roundabout island), then cross again on your left and continue down Charlton Road. A public toilet facility will be on your right, at the edge of a small green. Follow Charlton Road (you will pass over the busy A102), until it ends at Charlton House. Enter Charlton House Park - there are various paths through the park but you want to end up on the right hand side, exiting onto the Canberra Road, becoming Charlton Park Lane with the first views of the Kentish hills ahead. Here the route will begin to follow the Green Chain Walk, so look out for that specific local waymarking.

**AMENITIES: There is a café and public toilets in the north-east corner of Charlton Park.**

Having exited the park onto Charlton Park Lane continue straight ahead (east). The road will become Ha-Ha Road, with Woolwich Barracks on your left, and Woolwich Common and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on your right. At the crossroads continue straight on down Nightingale Place, becoming Plumstead Common Road. Look out for a park (Plumstead Common) on your left and follow the Green Chain Walk waymarking into and across the park. Be aware that a number of footpaths converge here. You should emerge onto Warwick Terrace opposite the Plumstead Pantry and



*Charlton House*



Plumstead Commons

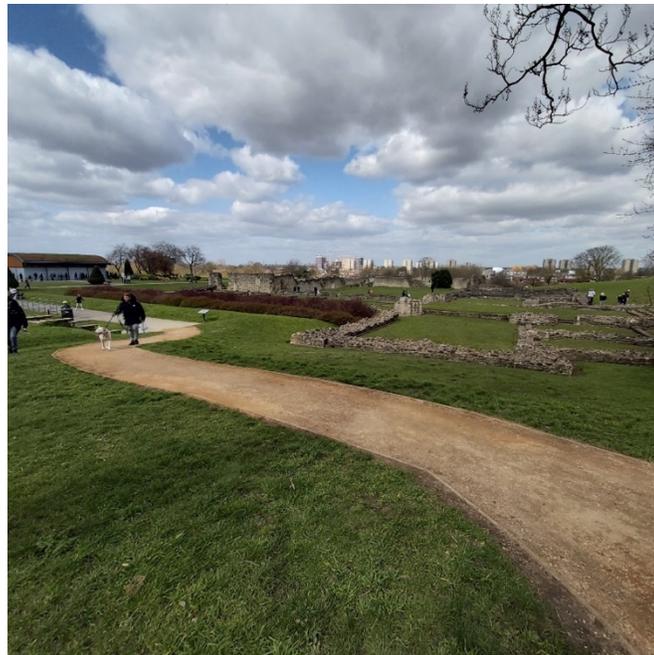
Old Mill Public House - continue east along Old Mill Road (the Old Mill Public House will be on your left). At the Church of St Mark with St Margaret there will be two footpaths on your right - take the left fork, down and up steps, emerging onto Lakeland Road. Cross and pick up Winn Common Road, cutting diagonally across Plumstead/Winn Common.

Before the very end of Winn Common Road you want to turn right (staying within the Common), and then left through a thicket, emerging onto Wickham Lane. Cross and go down Rutherglen Road - immediately on your left is a footpath through some parkland. Follow this around and to the right, up into Bostall Woods. The woodland path will bring you out onto Longleigh Lane, opposite an open space. Cross the road and continue along the footpath towards Bostall Hill Road (the footpath is waymarked but may not be immediately obvious in certain seasons). Once on Bostall Hill Road cross over and turn right. On your left will be a waymarked footpath (also signposted for Belvedere Private Clinic). Follow this woodland path, emerging onto the A2041.



Cross the road (carefully) and continue down Hurst Lane into a small housing development. Take the second left and then turn right - look out for a waymarked Green Chain Walk footpath on your left through a green fence/gate. Follow this footpath through woodland, following any signs for Lesnes Abbey. The footpath will emerge onto New Road - cross straight over and continue through the woods to reach the Abbey.

If you visit the Abbey Kiosk café, exit via the prominent window arch and follow the path down the dell to a playground. Enter through the gates and exit on the opposite side also through gates and follow a track at the back of houses until you emerge onto St Augustine's Road/Heron Road.



*Lesnes Abbey ruins*

**AMENITIES:** There is a café and public toilets at Lesnes Abbey

**TRANSPORT LINK:** Lesnes Abbey is a 800m (half-mile) walk from Abbey Wood town and train station.

**ACCOMMODATION**

Abbey Wood Experience Freedom Glamping £ Federation Road SE2 0LS 0208 311 7708  
Julius Guest House ££ 96 Mottisfont Rd, Abbey Wood, London, SE2 9LN

**SITES OF INTEREST:** Lesnes Abbey. Now ruined, Lesnes Abbey was founded in 1178 by Richard de Luci, Chief Justiciar of England, possibly in penance for the murder of Thomas Becket.

Continue following the Green Chain Walk eastwards - there are a number of

footpaths around the Abbey and surrounding woodlands, but the GCW is prominently waymarked. After a steep downhill section there will be a footpath crossroads - the GCW will continue straight ahead, and there will be two paths to your left and two to your right. Take the right-hand path (looks like a service road) on your left and follow this alternative path around the base of the hill for 1km, following the treeline. It will merge back with the footpath and onto St Augustine's Road/Heron Hill. Turn right up the hill, then immediately left onto Upper Abbey. You will follow Upper Abbey Road as it turns into Halt Robin Road, turning into woodland on your right-hand side called Franks Park. Enter and follow waymarking for the GCW through Franks Park in an easterly direction, emerging onto Valley Road. At the bottom of Valley Road turn left and immediately right up a footbridge (this is slightly hidden but just next to an old phone box on the sharp left bend of Pembroke Road). On the other side of the bridge you will emerge onto West Street, with St John the Baptist Church on your left.

### **LOCAL CHURCHES: St John the Baptist (CofE)**

Cross West Street at the zebra crossing and turn left, then take the next right down Corinthian Manorway. Follow to the river Thames waterfront, turning right onto the Thames Path, heading south-easterly, then east.

## **Erith**

The Thames Path can now be followed in an easterly direction for a number of miles.

**TRANSPORT LINK: Erith Railway Station is less than a mile (1.6km) away, and can be reached by turning back onto the main road. The route between Erith and Dartford becomes quite remote, so Erith is the final significant town before Dartford where you can find refreshments, or pick up public transport.**

Just past Erith Pier the Thames Path turns inland again via James Watt Way - keep left and merge onto Appold Street (past a row of bollards). You will emerge onto Manor Road. Turn left. Just after the mini-roundabout you will pass the entrance to the Manford Industrial Estate on your left. Turn left at the entrance to Erith Yacht Club. This lane heads north back towards the river before making a sharp bend to the right. It then bends to the left but here a footpath will be available straight ahead (waymarked) across the marshes. Follow this path parallel to the Thames - it will lead you along the riverbank towards Crayford Ness, with some light industrial buildings on your right. Following the curve of the river, the path will turn south when it meets the River Darent - the Dartford Creek Flood barrier will be visible on your left (note: this is not a river crossing). Follow the path south now, following the River Darent. After about 1.6km (one mile) the path will fork. To continue, take the left-hand path continuing along the banks of the River Darent.

**TRANSPORT LINK: The London Loop continues on your right. This option can be used to reach Slade Green railway station within 1.6km.**



*Confluence of the Darent and the Thames*



*Dartford Creek Flood Barrier*

The onwards path will meet another river, the River Cray, and turn west along its northern bank. Continue along this path, which becomes a light industrial road (there is a pavement, although beware of lorries) and passes under a railway line. At the fork turn left, emerging onto a roundabout with the A206. Turn left, sticking to the pavement, and follow the A206 (Thames Road) back under the railway line. You will need to cross the road at some point before the next roundabout - there are traffic islands just after the railway line that provide a safe option. At the next roundabout (you should now be on the right-hand side of the road) continue straight across (what would be the second exit if you were driving). Just before the start of residential housing you will see a brick wall with a gate in it on your right - follow this track through scrubland towards the railway line. Before the railway line turn left at a silver pedestrian gates, entering a new housing development. Follow Eton Way and, at the end, look for a paved footpath on your right continuing east. Follow this path, emerging onto Chatsworth Road. Cross and continue on the path straight ahead.

There will be a playground on your right, housing on your left, before emerging at the top of Francis Road. Do not turn down Francis Road but continue along a footpath straight ahead, crossing over the railway line via a footbridge. At the other end of the footbridge turn left and follow alongside the railway line, taking the left fork path

down a steep hill. Turn right onto Priory Road. This will join with Westgate Road - turn left past the modern retail complex. At the next junction a left turn will take you into Dartford train station, whilst a right turn down Hythe Street will bring you into the town centre and high street. A good ending point is the historic Holy Trinity Church at the eastern end of the High Street.

### **LOCAL CHURCHES:**

#### **St Vincent's (RC)**

**Holy Trinity (CofE)** Holy Trinity was built c 1080, although there is evidence to suggest an earlier church on the site. A chapel to St Thomas Becket was added in the 13th century, which acted as a stopping place for those on pilgrimage to Canterbury

### **ACCOMMODATION:**

**Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel** ££ 1 High Street Dartford DA1 1DU 01322 224415

**Holiday Inn Express** ££ University Way Dartford DA1 5PA 0371 902 1606

**Doubletree by Hilton Dartford Bridge** ££ Masthead Close, Crossways Business Park DA2 6QF 01322 284444

**Hotel Campanile** £ Crossways Business Park, Dartford DA2 6QN 01322 278925

**The Fulwich Hotel** £ 150 St Vincent's Rd, Dartford DA1 1XE 01322 223683

## **Dartford**



This section now follows the Darent Valley Path, but there is no immediate sign to it from the town centre. Taking the Holy Trinity Church at the eastern end of the High Street, cross over to the entrance to Acacia Hall (local government offices) and then continue ahead and to the left until you see a height barrier for cars and a sign to the Dartford Outdoor Theatre. Follow the paved lane south until you come to a river crossing where you turn right over a black metal bridge (there will also be a river bridge on your left). Entering Dartford Park, turn left and join the Darent Valley Path (waymarked). The footpath heads directly south, passing underneath the A225 and past Brooklands Lakes complex. You will emerge onto Powdermill Lane - turn left and cross the river and take an immediate right. The path now follows the east bank of the river through woodland.



*Brooklands Lakes*

The path then enters open fields before crossing a footbridge back to the west bank to leave the river and soon after emerge onto the A225. The path follows south on the pavement under the A2 till just after the entrance to a mill complex opposite the first houses on the other side of the road where it turns sharp left down a hedged way. This re-joins and re-crosses the river to head southeast under the M25 and then turns east to emerge onto Darenth Road South where you head south.

**LOCAL CHURCHES: St Margaret of Antioch (CofE) This church is the sixth oldest in England, and third oldest in Kent. It was built c 940, and its original Norman font is still in use.**

As you emerge onto Darenth Hill Road, cross immediately over and follow the footpath sandwiched tightly between a light industrial unit and the fishing complex car park (keep the chain link fence on your right). The waters of the Darenth Fishing Complex will be on your right. After about half a mile there will be a crossroads with another footpath/track. To visit St.John's Jerusalem turn right - otherwise continue onwards on the Darent Valley Path with the river to your right.

**LOCAL CHURCHES/SITE OF INTEREST: St John's Jerusalem.** Now a National Trust property, this 13th-century chapel is the only remaining structure of a large Knights Hospitaliers complex that stood on this site.

The path continues directly south, emerging onto Holmesdale Hill. Turn right and follow the road into the village of South Darenth.



*River Darent under the M20*

**AMENITIES:** South Darenth has a small number of cafés and pubs, as well as a Coop supermarket.

**TRANSPORT LINK:** Farningham Road Railway Station is 800m/half a mile outside the village.

Going through the village down Horton Road you will pass under the railway line viaduct, with The Bridges pub on your right. At the pub turn right down Station Road, crossing the river and turning left down the (waymarked) footpath. The footpath follows the river, emerging into Westminster Fields Park. There is an opportunity to cross the river here and explore the village of Horton Kirby. Otherwise continue south with the river on your left, emerging onto Franks Lane. Turn left, crossing the river, then take a right turn down a waymarked footpath - Horton Kirby Cricket Club will be on your left, and there may be horses in the fields to your right.



Follow this footpath and it will shortly rejoin the River Darent and pass under both the M20 and A20. Cross the river via the footbridge under the A20, following the path and emerging into Farningham close the Lion Pub.

**LOCAL CHURCHES: Ss Peter and Paul (CofE)**





*Lullingstone Castle*

Turn right along Farningham High Street and follow the road down Sparepenny Lane which will be on your left. After about 50m there will be a waymarked footpath on your left. Follow this, running parallel to Sparepenny Lane. You will need to rejoin Sparepenny Lane just after Furlongs Farm, emerging onto Lullingstone Lane/Riverside. Turn left if you want to explore Eynsford, otherwise turn right.

**SITES OF INTEREST: Eynsford Castle**

**LOCAL CHURCHES:**

**Eynsford Baptist Church**  
**St Martin's (CofE)**

**ACCOMMODATION: Castle Hotel ££ High St, Eynsford, Dartford DA4 0AB**  
**01322 633917**

Just after the road bends to the left, look out for a footpath on your right. Follow this footpath uphill, crossing the railway line and passing the Eagle Heights Wildlife Foundation. With only light traffic, it is also possible to stay on the road all the way to Lullingstone Roman Villa.

Continue southwest along the footpath then turn right, emerging at Lullingstone Roman Villa.

**TRANSPORT LINK: Eynsford Railway Station is 1.1km/0.7 mile from Lullingstone Roman Villa.**

Turn right at the villa and follow the lane south. Lullingstone Castle and the World Garden and the River Darent will be on your left.

**LOCAL CHURCHES: St Botolph's (CofE)**

The lane will join the car park for Lullingstone Country Park and emerge onto Castle Road. Turn right and follow the round south past Castle Farm, looking out for a footpath on your left just as the road bends to the right. Follow this footpath south, eventually emerging onto Mill Lane in Shoreham. Turn right and join Shoreham High Street if you want to explore the village. If not, continue on the footpath south, crossing the river. The path will fork - take the left-hand option (the one not following the riverbank), then follow as it curves around. At a footpath crossroads, turn right, emerging onto Station Road. Cross over and turn left.



*The Darent through Shoreham*

#### **LOCAL CHURCHES: Ss Peter & Paul (CofE)**

Look out for a waymarked footpath on your right and follow south (through the golf course and past the cricket ground).

#### **Stay on Station Road to reach Shoreham Railway Station in less than 800m/0.5miles**

This path continues directly south all the way into Otford village, emerging onto the High Street. Turn left to enter the village - the railway station is at the eastern end of the High Street. The route to Canterbury now turns east and offers two options and even a combination of the two. The North Downs Way (NDW) follows the ridges and hills all the way to Canterbury and Dover but the going can be rugged. An ancient pilgrim track along the valleys, which is easier going, involves some road walking and entails an occasional encounter with traffic. We have generally opted for the Pilgrim Way for this particular section.

## **Otford**

**LOCAL CHURCHES:**  
**Church of the Most Holy Trinity (RC)**  
**Otford Methodist Church**  
**St Bartholomew's (CofE)**

**SITES OF INTEREST: Otford Palace: Thomas Becket is said to have particularly enjoyed staying at Otford Palace while he was archbishop. 'Becket's Well' is found nearby - two springs of clear water are said to have been created to the east of the palace when - displeased with the taste of local water - Becket struck the ground with his crozier.**



*Otford*

From the centre (taking the roundabout duck pond as your guide) head east with the Woodman pub on your left. Follow the road along past the railway station. About 100m after crossing the railway line, turn right down Pilgrims Way East – there is a pavement on the right-hand side of the road. You can either continue on the Pilgrims Way through the village of Kemsing to Wrotham, or join the NDW in another 100m, up a narrow lane which shortly becomes a stepped footpath.

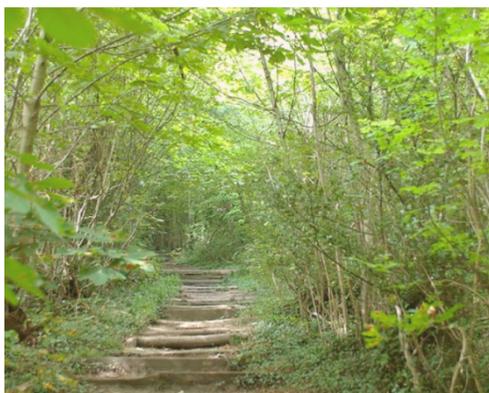
If on the NDW continue along the footpath through a wooded area. As it emerges from the treeline into an open space, the footpath forks - stay on the right hand side so that the open space remains on your left. The path eventually emerges onto the junction of Rowdow Lane and Birchin Cross Road - cross over and continue straight ahead (west) down Birchin Cross Road and look out for the waymarked footpath starting again on your right. The path will take you through woodland, with a fenced field on your left, emerging via a pedestrian gate into another open space. The footpath should be visible but continues straight ahead in a southwesterly direction, at one point crossing a field boundary. Continue onwards, emerging onto Shorehill Lane. Turn right and follow the lane as it curves around to the left, passing the brick pillars. The lane ends at Otford Manor. This is private property but you can turn right just past the manor house down a paved track (a walled camping ground will be on your left), which turns into a footpath through woodland. After about 100m turn left through the metal pedestrian gate, rejoining the North Downs Way.

Follow the waymarked NDW as it curves left to the north, through woodland and some open spaces. At times you will be able to see the brick walls of the Otford Manor campsite on your left. The footpath eventually turns west again through a wooded area, emerging onto Cotman's Ash Lane. Turn left, then take a right at a large farm/warehouse building - the path here may be barred by a locked metal gate, but the footpath is on the right hand side through a narrow metal gate.

Follow the footpath west, keeping the farm property on your left. At the next gate, continue through the open space straight across the field to the next gate, and then follow with the fence on your left through to a wooded area. The path will soon emerge

once more into open space - keep the treeline on your left as you continue northwest until you come to a crossroads with a faint trackway that crosses from north to south. The NDW continues to the east, but turn right (south) and follow the trackway along the boundary line between two fields (should be with trees), emerging onto the Pilgrims Way Road (you will need to climb over a metal farm fence here). Turn left and follow the road until it bends sharply to the right. Straight ahead should be a trackway - this is the NDW again and you can follow this in a straight line east for roughly two miles, emerging into Wrotham onto a road also called the Pilgrims Way.

There will be housing on your right - continue onwards, crossing Old London Road and continuing along the Pilgrims Way east. Eventually the M20 will be on your left (behind trees, but you should be able to hear it) and Wrotham Recreation Ground on your right.



## Wrotham

**ACCOMMODATION:** The Bull Hotel ££ Bull Lane, Wrotham, Sevenoaks TN15 7RF  
01732 789800

**LOCAL CHURCHES:** St George's Church (CofE)

**AMENITIES:** Wrotham has a number of pubs, cafés and shops. The Bull is specially recommended for both accommodation and food.

**TRANSPORT LINKS:** The town is not served by a railway station, but Borough Green station is a short bus journey to the south.

Wrotham is the last significant place for refreshments till Aylesford.

Immediately after a lay-by with some communal recycling bins on your right-hand side, look out for a footpath turning right. Follow this, and emerge onto the A20. Carefully cross over, turn left and follow the footpath over the bridge above the M20 then follow the pavement to the right down what is again called the Pilgrims Way. Follow this lane for 800m or just under half a mile, looking out for a waymarked footpath on your left, just after a private property.

You have a choice at this point. It is possible to stay on this lower level now for some 9.6km/six miles on a mix of road and trackway until the route leaves the NDW as you head towards the River Medway. Alternatively, follow the NDW signs as they offer off-road

walking starting in 800m/half a mile with a waymarked footpath on your left after just after a private property.

Join this footpath, which runs alongside the lane (this avoids walking on the road). After about 400m/¼ of a mile it rejoins the road for a few hundred metres, then returns to the fields a little further up (a sign on the gate warns you to stay on the footpath as it crosses private property). The footpath now follows the boundary of a field before heading into woodland and emerging onto a more substantial trackway. There are signs for the NDW throughout. Follow this track (also called Hognore Lane on some maps) until it emerges onto Gravesend Road. Turn right, then right again at Vigo Hill (a narrow lane just past a red post box). Follow for a few hundred metres (carefully, as there is no pavement), looking out for footpaths on your left. There will be two - one heading directly up the hill and one up some steps but slightly to the right. Take the second option (which is also waymarked for the NDW) into Trosley Country Park.

There are a number of footpaths and trails through Trosley Country Park - stay on the NDW heading northwest. After a period following the top of a ridge, the NDW will direct you steeply downhill to rejoin the end of a lane called (again) the Pilgrims Way. Turn left and follow the trackway west - this time you will be at the bottom of the ridge. After a 3.2km/two miles the trackway will emerge from the treeline into some fields, although the footpath itself will continue to be edged by trees. Continue straight on but keep an eye out for the NDW waymarking directing you to turn left. At this point, do not turn left but carry straight on (leaving the NDW). This footpath will continue to follow the boundary of fields down a green lane, emerging onto Birling Hill.

**ACCOMMODATION: Badgells Wood Campsite & Whitehorse Road, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0UF 07528 609324**

Turn left and pick up the footpath almost immediately opposite, which continues in an easterly direction. It is waymarked as a restricted byway but will eventually turn back into the Pilgrims Way lane again. You will eventually emerge onto a tarmacked road where you continue ahead towards the whitened gash of a chalk quarry. Then continue straight ahead into the small village of Upper Halling (there are no amenities here). Turn right at the first crossroads down Meadow Crescent (a fairly new housing development) - the road will end after only a short distance but the pavement continues. Follow this for a little while then take a waymarked footpath on your right, which will lead you alongside a steep escarpment before merging with a trackway that will head east alongside some fields. You will emerge onto a roundabout on the A228, with the River Medway visible straight ahead.



Turn left on the A228 to reach Halling within 1.1km/0.7 miles.

**TRANSPORT LINK: Railway station at Halling**

## Peters Bridge

**ACCOMMODATION: Manor Farm Campsite £ 1.1km.0.7 miles from Peter's Bridge**



*Peters Bridge, west side of the Medway*

From the A228 roundabout head east towards the River Medway, crossing Peters Bridge on the footway to the right. On the east bank, by the end of the crash barrier and just before the fence there is a gap giving access to a steep grassy bank down which the intrepid walker can scramble to reach the river bank. Otherwise continue to the roundabout just



*Going under Peters Bridge east bank*

beyond the eastern bank, cross over and weave left back under the bridge. You should now be facing south, with the River Medway on your right.

A new pedestrian walkway has been built on the eastern bank of the river which can be followed south until it ends and rejoins the main Village Road/New Court Road. Turn right and follow the road for about 800m/half a mile. As it starts to bend to the left the footpath will continue separately straight ahead. Stay on the footpath, where you will join a narrow lane (Old Church Road) with St Mary's Church on your right.



*St Mary's, Burnham*

Continue straight ahead along the waymarked Medway Valley Walk and turn right at the next crossroads (made of footpaths and trackways). The path will pass some light industrial units on the right. After 800m/half a mile the path will fork - stay on the right and then turn left - there will be a large solar panel installation on your right. There will then be an electricity pylon on your left - turn left immediately after this and follow this trackway past the sewage works (on your left) and to its terminus at the junction of Bull Lane and Aylesford High Street. The entrance to Aylesford Friary is straight ahead.

With the Friary on your right, join Aylesford High Street heading east (the white picket-fence sign welcoming you to Aylesford will be on your left) and follow into Aylesford town centre.

## Aylesford



**ACCOMMODATION:**

Church Barn La Grande £££ 76-103 High St, Aylesford ME20 7BA: 0345 498 6900

Aylesford Priory Guesthouse ££ 76-103 High St, Aylesford ME20 7BA 0345 498 6900

**LOCAL CHURCHES: Ss Peter & Paul (CofE)****AMENITIES:**

The Hengist £££

The Chequers Inn £

The Village Pantry £

The Bush £

**SITE OF INTEREST: The Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St Simon Stock.** The RC shrine is the main focus of Aylesford Priory (The Friars), and was established in 1242 as the first Carmelite house in England. It is also the site of St Simon Stock's mystical vision of the scapular. The Shrine is a popular pilgrimage destination.

**TRANSPORT LINK: Cross Aylesford bridge and follow Station Road for Aylesford Railway Station (less than 1.6km/one mile)**

As you walk into Aylesford along the High Street the pavement on the left-hand side will rise above the road - keep to the left as it becomes an independent footpath up to the church of Ss Peter and Paul. Just past the church you will emerge onto Vicarage Lane. Turn right to go back onto the High Street, then turn left and take the Rochester Road. The pavement will be on your right and you will pass a pub called The Bush. After 600m/ 0.4 miles turn right down Pratling Street - the pavement on your right will disappear after a few metres, but just a couple of metres after that there will be a footpath into the fields on your left. Follow the footpath as it cuts diagonally across fields which have been awkwardly divided into a succession of gated paddocks, emerging back towards Pratling Street (the road not the village of the same name), bringing you close to a farm. Turn left and follow the lane - it will bend sharply to the right and left, but before the next left bend there will be a footpath visible continuing straight onwards. Follow the footpath and turn right at the treeline where it joins the North Downs Way. Follow the waymarking as the NDW crosses the busy A229. Once on the other side of the road, a few footpaths overlap but make sure you follow the waymarking for the Pilgrim's Way, passing down the side of the Kent Motorhome Centre before turning left and crossing the high-speed railway line. At the next fork, take the right-hand option, leaving the NDW (which heads steeply uphill). Stay on the lower Pilgrims Way (a trackway), emerging onto Lidsing Road / Boxley Road.

Follow the busy road to the right, going slightly downhill for about 500m, then take the narrow lane (still the Pilgrims Way) on your left which appears as an extension of the road, towards Detling. Follow the lane until it rejoins the NDW just outside of Detling, where you can use the elevated footbridge to cross the busy A249, known locally as Jade's Crossing. On the other side of the A249 is the village of Detling.

## Detling



**LOCAL CHURCHES: St Martin's Church (CofE)**

**ACCOMMODATION: The Cock Horse Inn £ 39 The St, Detling, ME14 3JT  
01622 730144**

Follow the combined NDW and Pilgrims Way routes to the eastern edge of Detling, where the NDW turns the left. Stay on the PW into the small village of Thurnham.

## Thurnham

**LOCAL CHURCHES: St Mary the Virgin (CofE)**

**ACCOMMODATION:  
The Black Horse Inn ££ Pilgrims Way, Thurnham, ME14 3LD 01622 737185  
Thurnham Keep Country House B&B £££ 01622 734149 Castle Hill, Thurnham  
ME14 3LE**

After Thurnham the PW continues east past Cobham Manor and Broad Street, into the village of Hollingbourne.

## Hollingbourne

**TRANSPORT LINK: Turn left on Hollingbourne Hill to reach Hollingbourne Railway Station within 1.6km/1 mile**

**LOCAL CHURCHES: All Saints (CofE)**

From the crossroads of Hollingbourne Hill and the Pilgrims Way, orientate yourself so that the Dirty Habit pub is on your right as your face east. Follow the NDW signage



east, past the back of the pub car park. The Pilgrims Way and NDW have once again merged. After 3.7km/2.3miles you will emerge onto Slade Hill.

**TRANSPORT LINK: Turn right here to reach Harrietsham Railway Station after 1.6km/1 mile**



Cross Slade Hill and continue straight ahead on the Pilgrims Way, passing the Pilgrims Rest statue on your left. After the statue you will cross a lane that leads down to Lenham village, before passing through a gate onto a grassy drove road. Look out for the large War Memorial cross carved into the hillside here. The path continues through open countryside, past Cobham Farm - the village of Charing will be visible in the distance. After Charing the path will cross Dunn Street - turn left here to reach Dunn Street Farm Campsite.

**ACCOMMODATION: Dunn Street Farm Campsite & Dunn Street Farm, Dunn Street, Westwell, TN25 4NJ**

After Dunn Street the path approaches the back of the Eastwell Park Estate (private), where you can visit the remains of St Mary's Church (abandoned) and the alleged tomb of Richard Plantagenet, son of Richard III. Following onwards, the path will take you past the entrance to Eastwell Manor Hotel, and across the A251 Faversham Road into Boughton Lees and the large village green.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Eastwell Manor Champneys Hotel and Spa £££ Eastwell Park, Ashford TN25 4HR 0343 224 1700

## Boughton Lees

**LOCAL CHURCHES:** St Christopher's Church (CofE)

At Boughton Lees orientate yourself so that you are standing outside the Flying Horse pub, which sadly no longer offers accommodation, looking towards the common. Turn left then left again, once more down the Pilgrims Way. This a junction that needs care to manoeuvre. After 600m/0.4 miles a section of the NDW towards Canterbury will branch off on your left, but remain on the Pilgrims Way, looking out for an alternative NDW footpath on your right signposted towards Dover via Wye. There are in fact two footpaths signposted on your right; take the second one, which follows the boundary line of a field with a farmhouse on your left. At the end of the footpath turn left, then right, emerging onto Canterbury Road, and crossing a somewhat challenging stile.

Cross over and dog-leg to the left. Continue immediately onwards, along the NDW past Perry Court Farm and emerging onto Harville Road just opposite Wye Railway Station. Cross the railways line and river via Bridge Street, entering the village of Wye.



*Great Stour River, Wye*

## Wye

**LOCAL CHURCHES:** Ss Gregory and Martin (CofE)

From the centre of Wye, find the church of Ss Gregory and Martin - from the main gates take the right-hand footpath through the churchyard, passing through a gap in the brick wall at the end. Turn left and follow the path - allotments will be on your left. Turn right at the end, emerging onto Olantigh Road. Turn left and follow the road for two miles.

Just before Olantigh Road passes under the railway line turn right down Eggarton Lane. After 300m/0.2 miles the road will bend to the right, but a footpath will continue straight ahead (alongside the railway line, which will be on your left). This path is signposted as the Pilgrims Cycle Trail. It will cross Pope Street, but otherwise continues north uninterrupted for almost 3.2km/2 miles. After 3.2km/2 miles there will be a crossroads with another footpath - turning left will allow you to reach Chilham village, where there is a railway station.

Otherwise, bearing right continue straight on until the path emerges onto the junction of Pickelden Lane and Mystole Lane. Continue straight ahead on Mystole Road but look out on your left for the waymarked footpath of the Stour Valley Walk. Follow this footpath to the north, and turn right at the next opportunity. You will emerge onto the junction of Thruxted Lane and Bobbin Lodge Hill. Carry on straight ahead down Bobbin Lodge Hill and into the hamlet of Shalmsford Street. At the junction with Shalmsford Street cross straight over and continue down Bolts Hill. This road will turn into Parish Road - continue to follow this into Chartham.

## Chartham

**LOCAL CHURCHES: St Mary's (CofE)**

**TRANSPORT LINK: Chartham has a railway station in the centre of the village**



*Chartham*

From the centre of Chartham, stand outside the church of St Mary with the village green in front of you. On the right-hand side of the green is a waymarked footpath/cycle path that runs alongside the River Stour called the Stour Valley Walk. Turn left (northwards) then stay on this well maintained and waymarked footpath all the way into Canterbury!



*Outskirts of Canterbury*

## Canterbury

As you approach the city you are on the left bank of the river, which goes under a bridge belonging to A290. After a couple of kms/1.2miles when you've switched to the right bank of the river, take the exit up and to the right.



*Westgate Towers, where we leave the river path*

This brings you up onto the High Street. To your left the Westgate Towers should be visible but go right, immediately passing the Franciscan Gardens and Eastbridge Hospital of St Thomas the Martyr, on your right.

Continue up the High Street for a couple of minutes until Mercury Lane; turn left here, and after 100m you come face to face with the large doors to the cathedral walls.

Once through impressive gates, you are faced the magnificent Canterbury Cathedral. Currently all visitors not staying within the cathedral complex, must enter via the visitors' centre,; however, if you are possession of a CPR pilgrim's credential you will not be charged for entry.

