

9 After about 500 metres you will see a footpath on your left opposite Elaine Avenue. Head up this path which soon becomes a tarmac road. Follow it around to the right and out onto Dean Road. Turn left along Dean Road which becomes Leybourne Road and follow it to the junction with Abbey Road. Cross Abbey Road and walk up the pathway between houses and a grassed area to join the main road.

10 Turn left onto Gravesend Road and cross over the road at the traffic lights. Turn right and then take the first left up Broomhill Road. Proceed up this road and take the first turning on your left into Gorse Road. Take care here as there is no pavement. At the top of Gorse Road take the second footpath to the left to take you into Broomhill Park.

Until the 1970s a prefab estate stood here. Trees and shrubs including chestnuts, gooseberries, blackberries, damsons, cobnuts, rosehips and haws which were originally part of someone's garden can be found all around the site. Enjoy the 360° view of the Thames to the north and the Medway from the estuary at Sheerness past Gillingham, Chatham and Rochester to Blue Bell Hill in the west.

11 Take the path to the right heading down a series of 70 steps on the edge of the park. Turn right onto the path at the bottom and then take the path to the left into a housing estate. Follow this to the end until you reach the junction with Clarendon Drive.

12 Turn right onto Clarendon Drive and follow it downhill taking the left hand fork onto Goddington Road after a short distance. You leave the Strood Community Trail here.

13 Cross over the main road and turn right and then immediately left into Grove Road. Follow this road to the end. Once you have crossed over the road at the bottom you will see an underpass taking you back to Strood train station straight ahead of you.

Distance: 4.7 miles / 7.5km.

Time: 2½ hours approximately.

Terrain: Mainly walking along pavements. Some footpaths through Rede Common which can become muddy. Four flights of steps (17, 15, 10 and 73 (downhill)).

Start/end point: Strood train station.

OS Explorer Map: 148 & 163.

Knights & Kingfishers

Strood

A 4.7 mile / 7.5km circular walk from Strood train station along the edge of the River Medway, past historic landmarks and through pockets of stunning countryside nestled in the suburbs of Strood.



Temple Manor (Peter Fry Photography)



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This walk is endorsed by Explore Kent.

Photo credits cover: View from Broomhill Park, View to Rochester Castle (Friends of Rede Common). Meadow Brown and Goldfinch (Andy Vidler www.andyvidler.co.uk)



This walk takes you along the edge of the River Medway with stunning views downstream to Rochester with its towering castle and cathedral. Discover the historic Temple Manor and soak up the wonderful panoramic views offered from the hilltop pockets of countryside of Rede Common and Broomhill Park. A large proportion of this walk follows the Strood Community Trail; look out for the signposts with Knights templar logo along the way.

1 Coming out of Strood train station follow the road heading towards the river. At the end of this road cross over and turn right along Canal Road following the River Medway on your left hand side. Go under the bridge and using the traffic lights, cross over the main road by Rochester Bridge. Go down the flight of steps and continue along the riverside path.

On the far side of the river you will see Rochester Castle and Cathedral. The castle has the highest keep in England at 35 metres and was built by Norman Bishop Gundulf in 1086. Bishop Gundulf also built Rochester Cathedral as well as the Tower of London.

2 Follow the path round to the right and then under the bridge alongside Jane's Creek.

Take a moment to look at the many birds that rely on the mudflats for food such as lapwing and redshank. Kingfishers, cormorants and black-headed gulls are also often seen here.

3 At the end of the road turn left along Knight Road. Cross over the roundabout and continue along Knight Road to your left signposted to Temple Manor. After 300 metres you will see Temple Manor on your left hand side.

Temple Manor is part of a range of buildings assembled by the Knights which included a timber hall, barns, kitchens and stables. The stone building which has survived was added around 1240. The brick extensions date from the 17th century.

4 Continue past Temple Manor and after a short distance you will see a footpath on your right alongside Knights Park Industrial Estate. Follow this footpath uphill crossing over the railway bridge until you reach the main road.

5 Cross over the main road taking extra care as it is a busy road and turn right. Take the second road on your left (Hawthorn Road) and follow this for 500 metres until you reach a crossroads with Chestnut Road on your left and Columbine Road on your right.

6 Turn down Columbine Road and then take the first left onto Darnley Road. Follow this road until you get to Darnley Close which will be on your right. Head down this road and up the short flight of steps at the end. Cross over Carnation Road and head uphill into Hyacinth Road. Follow the road around to the left and shortly after passing two houses on your left, you will see a footpath taking you through woodland.

7 Head up the steps into Rede Common and follow the winding path uphill over a few more steps until you come out of the woodland into an open area. Turn left across the open area following the main path across the site.



Redshank (Andy Vidler)



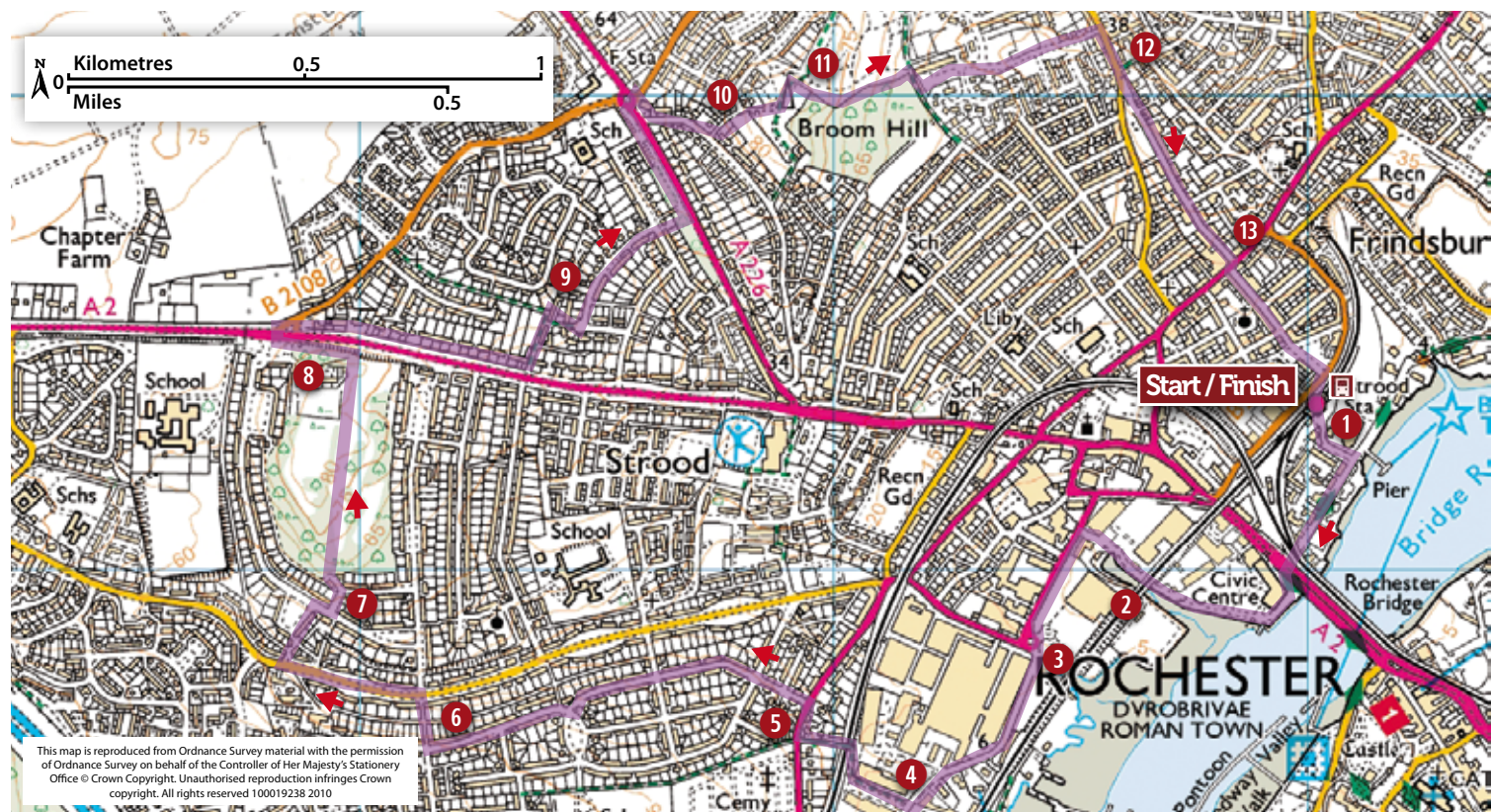
Sign (Peter Fry)



Rede Common

Known locally as Sandy Banks due to the underlying geology of sandstone, the 25 acres of open grassland, scrub and trees found here at Rede Common is home to an array of wildlife. Look out for birds such as willow warbler, chiffchaff, whitethroat and blackcap as well as many colourful plants that are found here. The views offered from this site towards Rochester are fantastic.

8 Once you have crossed the open area you will get to a junction of paths. Turn left heading down the tree-lined path and go down the steps at the bottom to bring you out onto Watling Street. Cross the road at the traffic lights and turn right to walk down tree-lined Watling Street.



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