

At this point you may decide to continue your stroll to Dumpton and Ramsgate, approx 2½ miles. There is also a coastal walk through to Ramsgate Harbour and Town.

Or walk back along the promenade to your starting point passing on your left the plinth to **Uncle Mack**, commemorating the seaside entertainer J H Summerson, who entertained visitors here from 1895-1948. The plaque was dedicated by Annette Mills who lived in the town and who appeared on television with Muffin the Mule.

Kingsgate, Reading Street and St Peter's Extension

Walk along the coast road and pass the **North Foreland Lighthouse**, which was the last manned lighthouse in the country, its keepers finally leaving in 1998.

If you continue past Joss Bay to Kingsgate Bay, you will see the estate of Lord Henry Holland (formerly Paymaster General Henry Fox). Holland House, the white building facing the bay, was built in the 1760s. Above it, Kingsgate Castle was built to house his servants and horses. Kingsgate Bay was named after a forced landing there by King Charles II in 1763. Turn left by the castle into Convent Road, to return to Broadstairs via St. Peter's.

Alternatively turn left at Joss Bay into Elmwood Avenue, up past North Foreland Golf Club and turn right into Flemish-inspired Reading Street. **Trinity Square** with its tiny cottages is one of the smallest in the country. Lord Northcliffe lived in the White House and the row of cottages on the seaward side were built on the old cemetery for sailors killed in the St James Day battle off North Foreland in 1666.

Turn left into Beacon Road, cross the railway bridge and fork right into Church Street, through to St Peter's, which during the Middle Ages was a busy farming community and far more important than the nearby village of Bradstow, now Broadstairs.

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The **Mockett's Farm House** by the Village Green dates from 1682. Turn left into the High Street opposite the church and on the left is **Nuckell's Almshouse**, built in 1753 as the parish workhouse.

Another major industry was smuggling, and many tunnels from the coast ran inland to cellars in the village. The original **Parish Church** was constructed in 1070. During the Napoleonic wars the Church tower was a naval signalling station.

The house known as **The Coves** was built in 1769, and is an excellent example of Georgian architecture. The "Coves" are probably the caves cut out in the garden which once connected to the seashore by subterranean passages.

Ranelagh Grove is on the right of the High Street and was the location for the Ranelagh Pleasure Gardens, established in 1818 closing in 1852.

The **Assembly Rooms** are now used as private dwellings, as is the **Steward's Cottage**.



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We suggest as a starting point you might stand on the promenade facing the sea, in front of the **Charles Dickens Public House**^[1], at one time the Royal Kent Library and the Assembly Rooms.

Viking Bay is the most central of Broadstairs' seven bays and gained its name following the celebration of the 1500th anniversary of the landing here by Hengist and Horsa in 449. On another day, why not follow the coastal path around the Isle of Thanet and visit all our bays?



Dickens House Museum was the home of Mary Pearson Strong upon whom Charles Dickens based the character of Betsy Trotwood in David Copperfield. There has been a dwelling on the site since Tudor times, and the current museum houses many

artefacts of the great Victorian author. There is a Dickens plaque on the outside of the Museum.

Continuing along the seafront on your left is **The Royal Albion Hotel**, originally the Phoenix but renamed in 1805 following the Battle of Trafalgar. **Prezzo** (formerly **Marchesi's Restaurant**) was the Marine Library until its closure in 1864.

Walk past **Balmoral Gardens** and see **Prospect House**, which was home to Victorian engineer Thomas Crampton. **Chiappini's** was for many years known as the Bath House, whose patrons included Charles Dickens and members of the Royal Family.

Thomas Crampton installed a pump here to raise water from the sea. The terrace of a domestic property known as **Eldon Place** is early 19th Century.

On your right is the **Broadstairs Sailing Club** where you will see a plaque referencing Sir Edward Heath, who was a member of the club for 53 years. It was also the site of the Chinese Lantern Café where the hapless proprietress was murdered in 1927.

As you leave the promenade, look across the road to see **The Old Curiosity Shop**, originally two cottages with a well which served houses in **Union Square**, probably built in 1588 as shown by the date on the outside. It has no connection with Dickens' novel. On your right is **The Palace Cinema** formerly the Windsor Cinema, built in 1911 as a Museum to house the Armoury collection of Guy Laking.



Pass through **York Gate**^[2] built by George Culmer in 1540 to defend the town against privateers. The original structure had a portcullis and stout wooden gates.

Look right to see **The Pavilion** which was built in 1933 and stands on the site of Whites Shipbuilders where many wooden ships of up to 400 tons were constructed. Beyond the Pavilion stands the original building of Station House which, in Napoleonic times, was the HQ of the Coast Blockade.

News of the victory at Waterloo was learnt here first in 1815 when Major Percy was sent by Duke of Wellington straight from the battlefield to report the news to the King. He landed here with the captured French Eagle standard and was fêted all the way to London, causing the house to be renamed **Eagle House**.

Follow the road down towards the harbour. In 1455 shipbuilding was the most important industry in Bradstow and nearby St. Peter's and in 1538 George Culmer built the first pier to protect his shipyard in Harbour Street.

The current **Pier**^[3] dates back to Tudor times with original timbers within the present structure. The 300-year-old white lookout building is the **Old Boathouse** which survives despite regular battering by storms, watched over by "The Highlander" and "The Grecian Head" both from wrecked ships. The Mary White was the town's first lifeboat launched in 1850 with a second lifeboat, the Culmer White being added shortly after. In 1857 the two lifeboats were hauled overland to Kingsgate Bay to rescue 23 lives from the American "Northern Belle".

Opposite the harbour, the **Tartar Frigate** was built in the 18th Century and was reputed to be a drinking haunt of smugglers who operated throughout the Isle of Thanet.



Take the fairly steep footpath up beside **Admiralty Cottage**, built in 1815 and one of only two remaining weatherboard houses in town. Follow the right hand fork and see **Bleak House**^[4], the taller part of which was built in 1801 as a private

residence, and in later years used by Charles Dickens as a holiday home.

From here you can follow the coastal path around the Isle of Thanet and visit 4 more beautiful bays of Broadstairs, including Botany Bay in Kingsgate. Or continue your walk along the Eastern promenade which leads to Reading Street and St Peter's (Approx 2.5 miles - See back page).

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Or turn back down the footpath and turn right away from the harbour, then right at the **Old Curiosity Shop** into **Union Square**^[5]; named following the Union of England and Scotland in 1707 and an area steeped in smuggling legend.



Out of Union Square, right up Harbour Street, left into Albion Street, and almost immediately cross over into Alexandra Road. Look back across Albion Street at **St Mary's Chapel**^[6], built on the site of Our Lady of Bradstow's Shrine. This is the oldest structure in

Broadstairs, dating back to Saxon times. The wooden Chapel was rebuilt around 1070 in stone and flint and some of the original structure remains within the current building.

For several centuries, ships would dip their topsails to the shrine as they passed. After being badly damaged in storms in the 1520s, the building was restored for Protestant worship in 1601.

Continue walking along Albion Street until you come to the **Royal Albion Hotel**^[7] on your left where you will see a plaque relating to Charles Dickens and his novel Nicholas Nickleby.

Now turn and walk up the right-hand side of the High Street. After around 100 metres, look to your left and you will see a sign above **For-Get-Me-Not** next to **J.Prentis** which tells you that Charles Dickens wrote part of Pickwick Papers here, one of 4 plaques in central Broadstairs.

Cross the road at **Prospect Place** and stand outside Terence Painter Estate Agents. This was the site of the **Bohemia Theatre** and there is one remaining pillar from the original structure.

Continue walking up the High Street until you come to **Broadstairs Railway Station**^[9], which opened on 5 October 1863. It was rebuilt in the 1920s and electricity was not installed until well into the 1970s. The buildings and platforms remained illuminated by gaslight until then.

Walk past the Station and cross the road to **The Crampton Tower Museum**^[10] which is a memorial to the great Victorian engineer Thomas Crampton who brought a water system to the town and designed steam locomotives and the first submarine cable. It also houses the Broadstairs Stagecoach.

See back page for the optional one mile Kingsgate, Reading Street and St Peter's Extension.

Walk down the High Street staying on this side. You will come to the **Bradstow Mill**^[11] on the corner of Clarendon Road. On the rear of the site was a Smock Mill, Pierremont Mill, mentioned in 1827, demolished in 1909.

Further down the High Street there is **Pierremont Hall**^[12], designed by Samuel Pepys Cockerell and built in 1792 by Thomas Forsyth. It knew various owners until its sale in 1896 to Leonard Posnett, who used it as a school. Most of the original 30 acres of land were developed for housing and the building was sold to Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Council in 1927.

The young Princess Victoria stayed at Pierremont Hall in 1826 and the single storey building in the grounds was once the Royal music room. The Hall itself is now used as offices, including Broadstairs and St. Peter's Town Council.

Continue down to the end of the High Street and turn right on to Charlotte Street, turn left on to John Street and right on to **Victoria Parade**. On your right hand side is Morelli's, first opened in 1932.

Turn right in to **Chandos Square**^[13], a square of flint-faced houses. In Wellington's day there was a gun battery here which housed three cannons. Chandos Square is also home to one of the oldest post boxes in England, hexagonal in shape dating from the reign of Queen Victoria.

If you walk to the end of Chandos Square and turn right there is a **plaque to Oliver Postgate**, creator of The Clangers, Ivor the Engine, Bagpuss, Pingwings, Pogles' Wood and Noggin the Nog.

Turning right out of Chandos Square, cross over onto the Promenade at the zebra crossing, and you will see the Bandstand set in the **Victoria Gardens**^[14] which were opened in 1892 by Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria.

On the clifftop, the **Jubilee Clock Tower**^[15]



commemorated Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. It was destroyed by fire in the 1970s and its replacement celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

To your right you will see the **Grand Mansions**, originally the Grand Hotel, built in 1882 with one hundred rooms, a billiard hall, stables and coach house.

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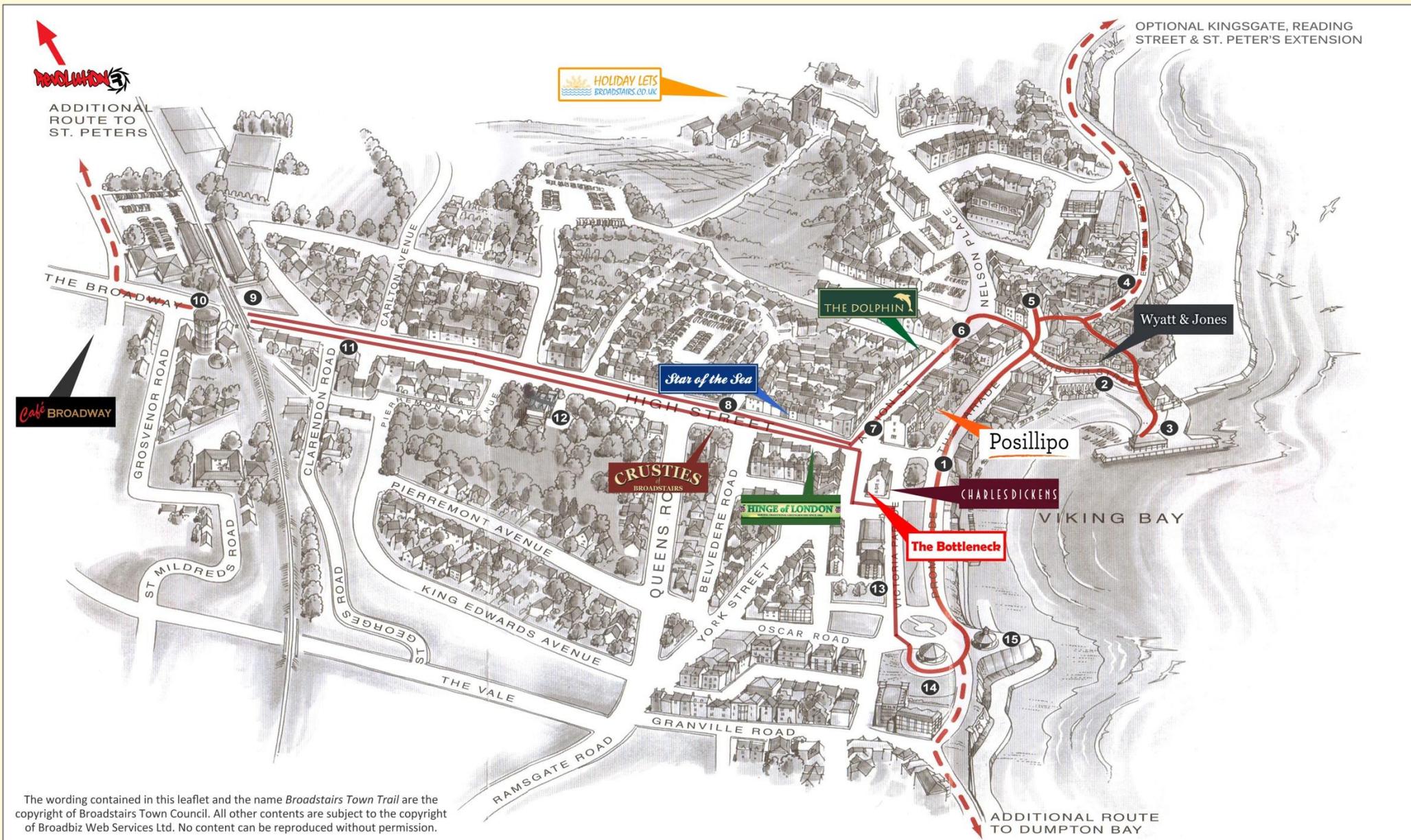
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