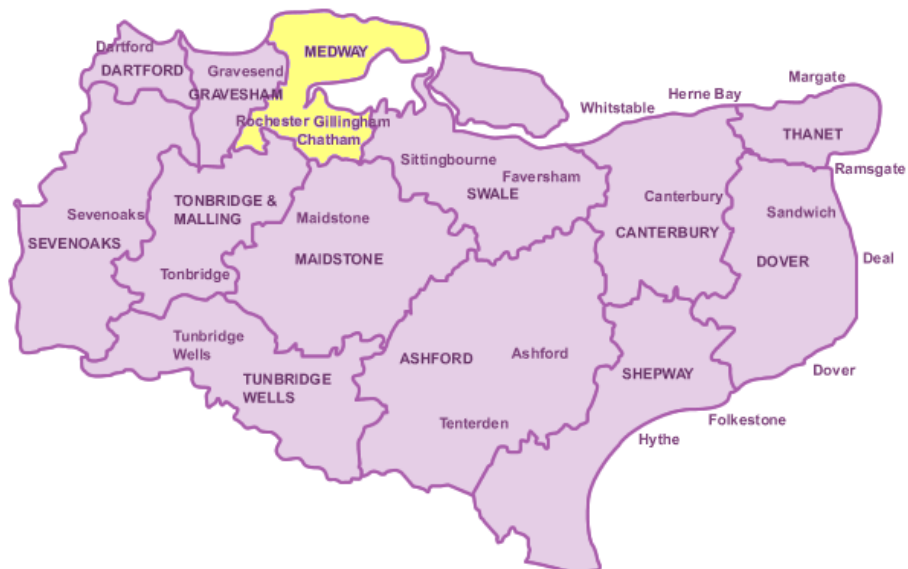


Medway – Rochester, Chatham & Gillingham

Whether you've come for Medway's maritime or military connections, to see the place Charles Dickens loved and wrote about, to visit heritage and leisure attractions or festivals and events, you'll find an area packed with things to see and do.



Facts about Medway

Did you know that....??

- Medway comprises of five towns, which surround the estuary of the River Medway, approximately half way along the North Kent coast. Medway consists of Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham, Strood, Rainham and various outlying villages on the Hoo Peninsular. Each of the towns has its own distinct character and history.
- Rochester has for centuries been of great strategic importance through its position near the confluence of the Thames and the Medway. Its history goes back as far as 604 AD when a small church formed part of Rochester Cathedral, which was later built in the 11th Century.
- In 1088 Rochester Castle was built, to defend the Medway Estuary from invaders. In 1127, Henry I gave custody of the castle to the Archbishop of Canterbury, William de Corbeil. The Archbishop built the huge central keep, which still dominates the view of the city from the river. Standing 34.5 metres high, it is the tallest Norman keep in the country.
- Rochester is surrounded by two circle fortresses; the inner line of forts built during the Napoleonic wars are; Fort Clarence, Fort Pitt, Fort Amherst and Fort Gillingham. The outer forts were built during 1860 and are Fort Borstal, Fort Bridgewood and Fort Luton.
- Chatham Dockyard was established by Elizabeth I of England in 1568 and the small village of Chatham grew. At one point thousands of men were employed at the dockyard, and many hundreds of ships and submarines were launched there including *HMS Victory* which was built there in the 1760s.
- Charles Dickens featured Rochester in his writings from spending most of his childhood in Chatham during 1817 when his father worked as a clerk for the Royal Navy. Dickens then returned to a village just outside of Rochester in 1856 until his death in 1870.
- The decline in naval power and shipbuilding led to the government abandoning the shipyard at Chatham in 1984. Rochester and its neighbouring communities suffered from economic recession for many years until Chatham became a market town in the 19th Century. By 1961 the town's population had reached more than 48,800.
- Today the dockyard is an historic site operated by Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and the rest has been developed for housing, industrial sites and as a commercial marina.

Countryside:

There are 48 other natural sites scattered throughout Medway, as well as country parks and nature reserves.

Riverside Country Park covers 100 hectares alongside the Medway Estuary, including Motney Hill and Berengrave Local Nature Reserve.

Capstone Farm Country Park covers 114 hectares of former farmland set on the North Downs. There is a variety of habitats within the park, including ancient woodlands, old orchards and a freshwater lake.

Berengrave Nature Reserve is a former chalk pit, which has been improved by Medway council to ensure access. The boardwalks now allow visitors to easily view the grassland, habitats and woodlands.

South Wood in Hempstead is one of the richest remaining woodland areas in Medway. It has been worked for centuries for firewood and timber but is now managed by the council for its wildlife value.

The Great Lines is mostly chalk grassland and receives thousands of visitors. The Great Lines also has enormous heritage value, thanks to its role in defending Chatham Dockyard, and include Fort Amherst.

Darland Banks is the largest countryside site in Medway and lies between Gillingham and Chatham. Darland Banks contains many rare and beautiful plants and over 20 other species of butterfly.

The Heron Trail is a lovely 18 mile circular route on the Hoo Peninsula, bounded by two great rivers, the Thames to the north and the Medway to the south. The trail provides a combination of rural and maritime interests.

Ranscombe Farm Reserve covers 229 hectares west of Strood, 10km of walkways and home to an exceptional diversity of plant species located in Kent's AONB.

Places to visit

Art Galleries & Museums:

The Central Theatre

170 High Street
Chatham
Kent ME4 4AS
Tel: 01634 338338
Email: theatres@medway.gov.uk

The Brook Theatre

Old Town Hall
Chatham
Kent ME4 4SE
Tel: 01634 338338
Email: arts@medway.gov.uk

Heritage:

Rochester Castle

The Keep,
Rochester,
Kent, ME1 1SW
Tel / Fax: (01634) 402276
Email: visitor.centre@medway.gov.uk
Website: www.medway.gov.uk/tourism

Rochester Cathedral

High Street,
Rochester,
Kent, ME1 1JY
Tel: (01634) 810073
Fax: (01634) 401410
Email: enquiries@rochestercathedral.org
Website: www.rochestercathedral.org

The Historic Dockyard

Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust,
The Old Surgery,
The Historic Dockyard,
Chatham,
Kent ME4 4TZ
Tel: (01634) 823800

Royal Engineers Museum

Prince Arthur Road,
Gillingham,
Kent, ME4 4UG
Tel: (01634) 822839
Fax: (01634) 822006
Email: mail@remuseum.org.uk
Website: www.remuseum.org.uk

Guildhall Museum

High Street,
Rochester,
Kent, ME1 1PY
Tel: (01634) 848717
Fax: (01634) 832919
Email: guildhall.museum@medway.gov.uk
Website: www.medway.gov.uk

Fort Amherst

Dock Road,
Chatham,
Kent, ME4 4UB
Tel: (01634) 847747
Email: info@fortamherst.com
Website: www.fortamherst.com

Old Brook Pumping Station

Solomons Road,
Chatham,
Kent, ME4 4LA
Tel: (01634) 362847
Email: miag@oldbrookpumping.co.uk
Website: www.oldbrookpumping.co.uk

Temple Manor

Knight Road,
Strood,
Kent, ME2 2AH
Tel: (01634) 402276
Email: visitor.centre@medway.gov.uk

Gad's Hill Place (Home of Charles Dickens)

Higham,
Kent, ME3 7PA
Tel: (01634) 318825
Email: ghp@significantevents.co.uk

Fax: (01634) 823801
Email: info@chdt.org.uk
Website: www.chdt.org.uk

Restoration House

17-19 Crow Lane,
Rochester,
Kent, ME1 1RF
Tel: (01634) 848520
Email: robert.tucker@restorationhouse.co.uk
Website: www.restorationhouse.co.uk

Six Poor Travellers

97 High Street
Rochester
Kent
ME1 1LX
Tel: 01634 845609
www.medway.gov.uk/tourism

Upnor Castle

High Street,
Upnor, Rochester,
Kent, ME2 4XG
Tel: (01634) 718742
Email: visitor.centre@medway.gov.uk
Website: www.medway.gov.uk/tourism

Dickens World

Leviathan Way
Chatham Maritime
Chatham
ME4 4LL
Tel: 01634 890421
Email: enquiries@dickensworld.co.uk
Website: www.dickensworld.co.uk

Diggerland

Medway Valley Park
Roman Way
Strood
ME2 2NU
Tel: 0871 2277007
Website: www.diggerland.com

Leisure attractions:

Arethusa Venture Centre

Lower Upnor,
Rochester,
Kent ME2 4XB
Tel: (01634) 719933
Fax: (01634) 295905
Email: info@arethusaventurecentre.org.uk
Website: www.arethusa.org.uk

River Boats:

Paddle Steamer - Kingswear Castle

The Historic Dockyard,
Chatham,
Kent, ME4 4TQ
Tel: (01634) 827648
Email: info@kingswearcastle.co.uk
Website: www.kingswearcastle.co.uk

X-Pilot

Board at Rochester Pier.
Tel: (01634) 304308 / 07952 784311
Email: xpilot@blueyonder.co.uk
Website: www.xpilot.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk

Shopping:

Dockside Outlet Centre

Maritime Way
Chatham Maritime
Chatham
Kent
ME4 3ED
Tel: 01634 899 389
Website: www.docksideshopping.co.uk

Pentagon Shopping Centre

Chatham
Kent ME4 4HY
Tel: 01634 405388
Email: enquiries@pentagonshoppingcentre.co.uk
Website: www.pentagonshoppingcentre.co.uk

Chatham High Street

Chatham,
Kent ME4

Rochester High Street

Rochester,
Kent ME1

Gillingham High Street

Gillingham,
Kent ME7

Buckmore Park Kart Circuit

Maidstone Road,
Chatham,
Kent, ME5 9QG
Tel: (01634) 201562
Fax: (01634) 686104
Website: www.buckmore.co.uk

Chatham Ski and Snowboard Centre

Alpine Park,
Capstone Road,
Gillingham,
Kent, ME 3JH
Tel: (01634) 827979
Fax: (01634) 814075
Website: www.chathamskislope.co.uk

The Ice Bowl

Ambley Road,
Gillingham Business Park,
Gillingham,
Kent, ME8 0PP
Tel: (01634) 388477
Fax: (01634) 374065
Website: www.theicebowl.co.uk

Hundred of Hoo Leisure Centre

Main Road
Hoo
Rochester
Kent ME3 9EY
Tel: 01689 215588 Email: leisure@medway.gov.uk

Black Lion Leisure Centre

Mill Road
Gillingham
Kent ME7 1HF
Tel: 01634 852907
Email: blacklion@medway.gov.uk

Parks, Walks & cycling:**Capstone Farm Country Park**

Capstone Road
Gillingham
Kent ME7 3JG
Tel: 01634 812196
Fax: 01634 811438

Cliffe Pools

Bromhey Farm
Eastborough
Rochester
ME3 8DS
Tel: 01634 222480

Riverside Country Park

Lower Rainham Road
Gillingham
Kent ME7 2XH
Tel: 01634 378987
Fax: 01634 263827

Northward Hill RSPB Reserve

Bromhey Farm
Eastborough
Rochester
ME3 8DS
Tel: 01634 222480
Email: northkentmarshes@rspb.org.uk

Cuxton North Downs Way

Lost Landscape Heritage Trail
Circular route 3.7 miles

Medway Valley Walk (28.25 Miles)

between Tonbridge and Rochester

Saxon Shore Way walks (160 miles)

From the port of Gravesend to Hastings.

Thames/Medway Estuary Walk (1.8 miles)

Following the estuary from Grain village

Darlands Bank Walk

From shopping centre at Hempstead Valley Drive
Email: info@medway.gov.uk
Website: www.medway.gov.uk/index/leisure/walks

To find out more visit:
www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/explore-kent

Tourism Figures: Key headline figures for Medway for 2006

- ◆ It is estimated that around 555,625 overnight tourism staying trips were made to Medway in 2006. Of these trips, domestic visitors made 86% of trips (476,968) and overseas visitors made 14% of trips (78,657). Those visitors spent £78,448,815 by staying visitors on their trip.
- ◆ It is estimated that around 3.1 million tourism day trips were made to Medway in 2006, generating a further £113,077,006 trip expenditure.
- ◆ In total, around £191,544,615 was spent on trips to Medway in 2006 by staying and day visitors.
- ◆ It is estimated that 13% of total trip expenditure went towards the cost of accommodation. Approximately a third of total trip expenditure (33%) was spent in the retail sector and 27% was spent in catering establishments. Approximately 10% of total trip expenditure went on visits to attractions and other entertainment. Finally, the remaining 14% of total trip expenditure was spent in the transport sector.
- ◆ With the addition of other expenditure tourism activity generated £215,115,821 expenditure. Of this expenditure, £265,656,300 directly benefits local business in terms of direct and indirect business turnover through multiplier effects.
- ◆ This income supported 3,859 FTE jobs and 5,279 Actual jobs. Overall it is estimated that tourism expenditure supported 8% of local employment.

*Figures from Cambridge Model 2006

Accommodation figures for Medway:

Type of Accommodation	Bedrooms/ Units/Pitches	Bed spaces
Caravan & Camping	190	980
Self catering (Cottages, Barns & Houses)	7	27
Serviced (Hotels, B&B's & Inn's)	841	1,810
Group (shared accommodation)	115	140

*Information sourced by Tourism South East

Population Figures:

	Male	Female	Total
Population (Mid 2006)	123,700	128,000	251,700

Source: Population Estimates Unit, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

To find out more visit your local Visitor Information Centre:

Medway Visitor Information Centre

95 High Street,
Rochester, Kent, ME1 1LX
Tel: 01634 338141
Fax: 01634 847891
Email: visitor.centre@medway.gov.uk

Useful Tourism Contacts:

Medway Council

Civic Headquarters
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent
ME4 4TR
Tel: 01634 306000
Email: info@medway.gov.uk
www.medway.gov.uk/tourism

Visit Kent

Kent County Council
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent, ME14 1XX
Tel: +44 (0) 1622 671411
Website: www.visitkent.co.uk
www.visitkent.co.uk/business

