

The Barnsley Trail

Description A fairly level walk, with open countryside and coastal views. **Distance** 3.5 miles. **Start** There are bus stops near the High Street, Seaview or at the Wishing Well pub, Pondwell. **Access information** A walk with no stiles, but can become muddy in the Barnsley valley area. It is possible to follow the beach from Seagrove Bay to the slipway at Seaview (High Street), but this is for the sure-footed as there are rocks and shingle. Care should be taken with tidal conditions and the weather. **Refreshments** The Wishing Well pub at Pondwell; cafés in Seaview. **Toilets** At the Seaview Hotel in the High Street and near Seagrove Bay. **Internet** All walks in this series can be downloaded from www.iowramblers.com/page44.htm.

Countryside Code

Respect Protect Enjoy

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs



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This leaflet has been produced with the assistance of Nettlesome and Seaview Parish Council



Pictured Across The Solent to Portsmouth's Spinnaker Tower (front cover); Spitbank Fort (inset, left); On the beach at Seaview (inset, right)



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The Barnsley Trail



Britain's maritime heritage is celebrated in this coast and country ramble, from the French invasion of 1545 to D-Day, four centuries later

This circular walk was devised by Nettlestone and Seaview Parish Council to encourage residents and tourists to discover some of the many miles of footpaths in this area.



Main picture
Spitbank Fort
Inset left to right
The Priory Bay Hotel today; Sculpture of Churchill and Roosevelt; Plaque commemorating the part played by this part of the world in the D-Day landings

History

The rural stretch through the Barnsley Valley (R95 and R61 paths), is interesting historically. Once, the sea reached up to the park and Longlands copses and this type of inlet was favoured by the Romans. In medieval times the inlet was developed into Barnsley harbour and there were works stretching out to sea. Quite large ships reached the mill south of the present B3330 close to R61. The mill pond embankment can still be seen. When the Napoleonic wars cut off supplies of salt from sources in the Mediterranean, an embankment was built across the mouth of the harbour, the present day Duver, and a series of sluices and salt pans provided facilities for salt production where Salterns Cottages now stand.

The Spithead Forts

In 1805, the Battle of Waterloo brought peace to Europe and restored the monarchy to France, but England continued to be suspicious of French intentions. In 1848, Europe was again in a state of revolt. A second republic was declared in France and Louis Napoleon became its first president as Napoleon III. The introduction of advanced artillery and steam-driven iron ships caused near panic in England and in 1860 the order to build the Spithead forts was given. They were intended to protect Portsmouth dockyard, and over the years were armed and rearmed as technology improved. Both No Mans Land Fort and Horse Sand Fort became naval signal stations. In 1909, a line of concrete blocks had been placed between the Island and No Mans Land Fort, as

well as between Horse Sand Fort and Southsea.

There were four sea forts built, at St Helens, The Spit Bank Fort near Portsmouth as well as the two centrally located forts. Palmerston, the Victorian prime minister, pushed through the construction in the face of bitter opposition. The cost was huge and Gladstone, the chancellor, threatened to resign as the cost escalated. No Mans Land Fort originally had 400 men with 49 guns weighing 70 tonnes each. The fort has now been sold and developed as a luxury hotel. One problem is that there is nowhere to moor a yacht and boats have to be winched onto the fort.

Seaview Pier

The original pier which was built in 1878 has now disappeared. On Boxing Day 1951, a length of pier 100 feet long was washed away during a storm, and the remainder was gradually removed over the following years. The pier had fallen into decline during the 1920s and 30s, with the availability of bus services between Ryde and Seaview, and the final users were the armed forces during the Second World War.

It was 1,000 feet long and 15 feet wide, with a unique undulating deck. There were four towers from which the pier deck was suspended. There were six boat services a day in the summer, and in 1881 it was visited by the Prince and Princess of Wales who arrived by steamer from Osborne House to attend the Seaview Regatta.

Seagrove Bay

The first development of 14 houses was built in the 1880s. Until that time, the only property in the area was Seagrove Manor, whose estate ran down to the bay. Until the 1960s the could be recognised by a line of summer beach tents which lined the sea wall every year.

The Priory Bay Hotel

There was a 12th century Benedictine monastery on St Helen's Duver, alongside the church whose tower still remains. The current priory was established as a farmhouse in Tudor times. In 1800 it changed to a residence, with a succession of private owners until 1938, and was then occupied by the army during the Second World War. During this time the barn became a barrack room and the security services also used the priory as their HQ on the Island. The priory re-opened at the end of June 1998 as a luxury hotel.

French invasion

In July 1545, Seaview was one of the sites of the last French invasion, and it is thought that the local militia caught the French and pushed them back to the sea. The entire Island population at the time was approximately 9,000 people, but Richard Worsley, the Captain of the Isle of Wight militia, had an army of 6,000 under his command. Everyone on the Island had compulsory military training, with women often fighting as archers.

one of Lord Palmerston's defences
Spitbank Fort guarding against invasion by the French

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Walk route



Scan this code with your smart phone to access the Southern Vectis timetable applicable to this walk.

Pictured Inset (Top) Beachcombing at Seaview
(Bottom) Perfect for rockpooling

Route From the bus stop **1** near The Wishing Well pub at Pondwell, go downhill and cross the road at a bend and follow bridleway R61 through a gate **2** and across a green field track to a gate and an enclosed track. Turn left onto a gravel track **3** and cross a bridge over a stream. Turn left on R62 **4** and at a field, follow the left hand edge to reach a boardwalk which turns left.

Go through a Ramblers gate **5** and across a field by a copse. Go through a kissing gate onto a track on the edge of woodland.

Cross the main road **6** and then turn right into Priory Drive. Continue straight on the track R72. At an entrance to the Priory Hotel **7**, turn left downhill to reach Seagrove Bay **8**. Here, there is a choice of following the beach or turning left along Pier Road to the shops. Turn right into High Street and continue to the esplanade **9**. The coastline between Seaview and Seagrove Bay is the site of a lost pier (1881-1951) and also where ships sailed to take part in Operation Overlord on 6th June 1944.

Continue along the esplanade, passing the yacht club and then on R91 along the sea wall. At **10** there are views of the Spinnaker Tower and sea forts. Turn left into Salterns Road, passing cottages. Continue straight on and then turn right into Pond Lane and follow bridleway R95.

The path emerges at Nettlestone Hill **11**. Turn right into Farm Shute, footpath R114 at a viewpoint overlooking the Barnsley Valley and The Solent. The path descends into the valley, emerging onto a pathway – follow this to return to the Wishing Well bus stop.



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