



**4 Maidstone Cemetery** An area of about 20 hectares with c.19 Lodge and Chapel, and a variety of mature trees. Since it opened in 1858 it has seen over 30,000 burials. Walk in for a quiet visit but remember that the gate will be locked at 4 pm! **Return to the gate and follow the footpath along the Cemetery wall, through the 'Triangle Wood', full of bluebells in spring, and past the small...**

**5 Animal Farm** It belongs to the New Line Learning Academy, with sheep, goats, cows etc. enjoying a free-range existence. **As you walk along the edge of the open playing field on your left, turn around and look back towards the...**

**6 North Downs** Chalky hills that formed at the bottom of a tropical sea about 100 million years ago in the mesozoic era. Now designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. **Continue on the path into the open countryside past the...**

**7 Fields** In spring you may be able to see the sea of golden yellow while the oil seed rape is flowering. **Continue past the ragstone cottage and at the end of the track, climb over the stile into...**

**8 Walk Meadow** Managed by the Boughton Monchelsea Amenity Trust, a green open space boasting a rich mix of local flora and fauna. **Walk downhill through the meadow and out over another stile, crossing Bottlescrew Hill into Atkins Hill which will take you past picturesque old houses. Take the path to the left of the Kingfisher Angling Preservation Society, then right into...**

**9 Quarry Wood** Now a sweet chestnut coppice with ground flora of cowslip, bluebells and wild garlic, it hides former ragstone quarries. The stone, of excellent quality, was used to pave Hampton Court for Henry VIII and, later, to build Maidstone Prison, Barming 'Lunatic Asylum' and many important buildings in London. **Turn right following the fence. Note the majestic trees and the lake on your right in the grounds of the Boughton Manor. At the V-junction take either path. On the upper path watch out for collapsed edges, especially on wet days. At the end of the wood spot a small waterfall on...**

**10 Loose Stream** On its way from Langley to Tovil, the stream disappears underground in Boughton Monchelsea, then re-emerges and flows through dozens of mill ponds. It once supplied power to the thriving wool processing and paper making industries in the valley. **You will follow the stream for the rest of this walk. Turn right into Salts Lane and follow it under the...**

**11 Viaduct** Designed and built in 1830 by Thomas Telford, the most famous civil engineer of his time. **Follow the road down to the...**

**12 Loose village** A very pretty place, dating back to Saxon times, with many old buildings: medieval All Saints Church with a 1000 year old yew in its graveyard, Elizabethan Church House, c.19 Wool House (National Trust) and others. **Follow the stream along the Brooks Path with water either side. At the end either turn left to explore the village or turn right and walk uphill along the start of the old track called Kirkdale. Turn left past the white detached house and follow the narrow path between gardens into the...**



**13 Loose Valley** Designated an historic Conservation Area and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest, it is a 'post industrial' landscape of mill ponds and quarries reclaimed by nature. The stream supports beautiful and rich wetland habitats, with meadows and pastures higher up the sides of the Valley. **Turn right and follow the footpath, and then the tarmac track, close to the stream all the way to...**

**14 Bockingford Mill** First a 'Fulling Mill'\* and later a 'Washing Mill' where rags were broken up for paper making at Hayle Mill downstream. **Turn left into Hayle Mill Road and follow it to...**

**15 Hayle Mill** Also a Fulling Mill since c.17, later re-built as a paper making mill with a large weatherboarded drying loft stretched across the valley. Grade II listed building, soon to become residential homes. **Turn right past a large pond on your right and walk uphill through a wilderness of trees covered in ivy and old-man's-beard. Follow the path through a housing estate, taking note of a view of the North Downs to your left. At Postley Road turn left and right into Armstrong Road which takes you back to South Park.**

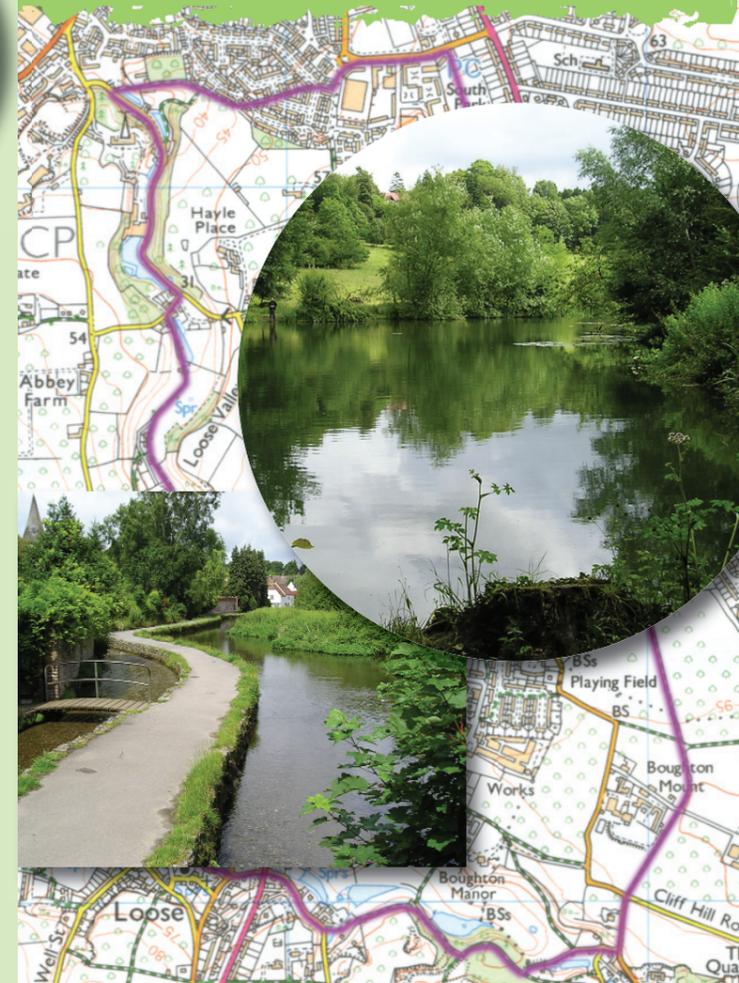
\* Fulling - the process of cleansing, shrinking and thickening cloth by moisture, heat and pressure, using fine clay known as 'fuller's earth'.

For more information please contact:  
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# Walk Maidstone

## Walk 7: Loose



improving our parks  
and open spaces



# Walk 7 : Loose

**Distance:** 5 miles (8 km)

**Time:** about 2 hours

**Suggested start/finish point:** South Park

**Suggested route-break point:** Loose village

**Terrain:** Varied, with unmade paths (some muddy when wet), slopes and climb-over stiles. Seats in Loose only.

**Refreshments:** Available in Loose

**Public toilets:** South Park

**Public car parks:** South Park



Discover the open countryside on your doorstep. Take in the sights and sounds of woodland, fields and meadows. Follow the Loose Stream as it flows from one mill pond to another on its way down through the spectacular Loose Valley. Touch history in the beautiful old village of Loose, with its timber-framed houses, a Medieval church and the old Wool House (National Trust).

**1 South Park** A public park since 1929, with a range of facilities including tennis courts, a skate park and some original features (e.g. metal railing in Armstrong Road and fountain basin). Walk south through the playing fields and leave the park through a gate in the hedge. Follow the boundary of the allotments, along Mayfair Avenue to the end, and a path between houses will lead you to Loose Road. Cross safely at the traffic lights, walk back towards Wheatsheaf Close and the...

**2 Kent Fire and Rescue Services Headquarters (The Fire Station)** As a child you may have experienced watching the fire crews training sessions: rescuing people from the burning tower. At the end of Wheatsheaf Close turn right into...

**3 Pheasant Lane** A quiet old country lane, shaded by ivy-covered trees. No verges for about 200 metres so make sure any car drivers can see you from a safe distance. The ragstone wall on your left marks the boundary of the...



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