

Shellness Beach



view lots of early aviation memorabilia.

Now you can visit Muswell Manor for a meal or a drink and

T.O.M. Sopwith together with many others.

the Hon CS Rolls; Griffith Brewer; AV Roe; Frank McClean and where historical names from the past met; JTC Moor-Brabazon; Also, on this site, the world's first airplane factory was built field at Shellbeach and conducted their flying experiments here. headquarters at Muswell Manor where they acquired a flying flight". The Short Brothers and the aero club headed up their aeronautical history – for Shellness is the birthplace of the "first However, its heritage is interwoven with a rich tapestry of

distance from London and the main towns of the South East. has the added attraction that it is also within easy driving food that offer a whole range of tastes for the summer visitor. It amusements, night clubs, camping and caravan sites, and good traditional seaside resorts, with long sandy beaches, Today Leydown, Warden and Shellness are known as

## LEYSDOWN, WARDEN & SHELLNESS

Welcome to

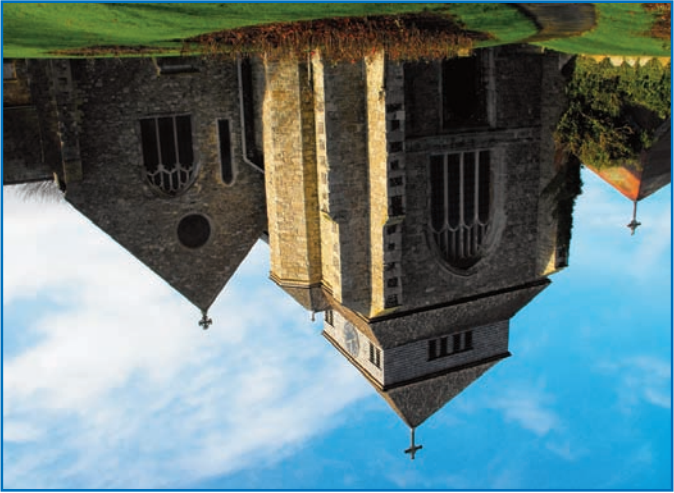
# The Isle of Sheppey



Your Guide to the  
Towns & Villages of Sheppey



Minster Abbey



Minster-on-Sea, as it is now known, is by far the largest parish on the Island and one of the largest in Kent.

Benedictine Abbey began here in medieval times. and twelfth century gatehouse remind you that a was the paramount manor over all Sheppey. The hilltop church endowed the Minster Abbey for the maintenance of nuns and Queen Sexburga, and the ruling monarch King Egbert built and neighbourhood of Minster guarding the mouth of the Thames. Sheppey, threw up fortifications, and settled themselves in the very interesting when the Saxons swarmed onto the Isle of during the Anglo Saxon period the history of Minster becomes of people living in Minster as far back as Roman times and Sheppey centres in, and radiates from Minster. There is evidence record, or even tradition, the whole interest of the Isle of From the earliest times of which we have any authentic historic the English coast.

panoramic effect is impossible to eclipse by any other part of the Swale and the Nore; with the Kentish hills on the other. Its not only of the whole of the Island but also over the North Sea, erected has a plateau that offers extensive and delightful views natural fortification. The hill upon which this fortress was oldest of its kind in the kingdom, occupy the site of this ancient wonderful. The ruined Abbey and its well preserved church, the Minster is Sheppey's highest point so the views here are

## MINSTER

## SHEERNESS

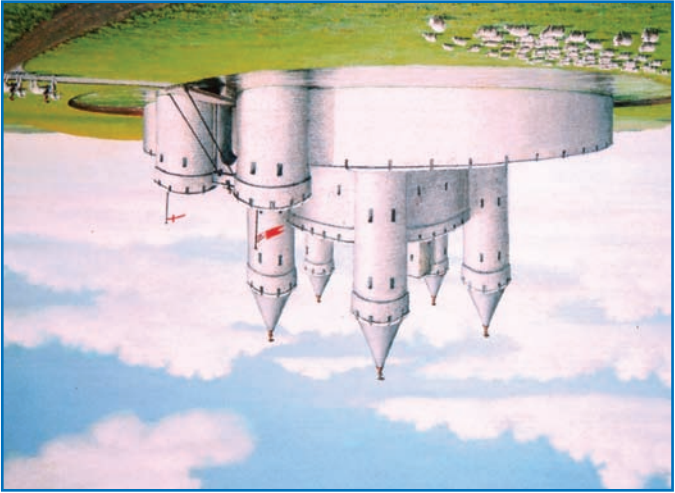
Sheerness is the gateway to the Island by rail and sea. It is the main shopping and commercial centre. In the middle of the seventeenth century Sheerness was just an uninhabited promontory of marshland. That would all change in 1665 when Charles II decided to construct a fort there for the defence of the navy anchorage up the Medway, and build an accompanying dockyard. In the years that followed a small collection of houses grew up adjacent to the dockyard. This little collection of dockyard workers' homes would become known as Blue Town supposedly after the colour of the paint, originating from dockyard sources that was used to decorate the buildings' exteriors. The beginning of the nineteenth century would witness a total rebuilding of the dockyard on a much enlarged scale and requiring a greatly increased workforce. This produced a need for much more housing and, to the east of the original naval quarter, the modern town of Sheerness began to grow. The eventual closure in 1960 of the dockyard and garrison, the main sources of prosperity in Sheerness, was a huge blow to the town.

The High Street has may local shops as well as several national companies. The leisure centre and swimming pool, sand pit and paddling pool are situated by the beach and within easy walking distance from the bus and train stations



Sheerness Dockyard

Queenborough Castle



surrounding an old inn, The Halfway House. predominantly of a growing number of streets of houses main road between Queenborough and Sheerness, comprises will dovetail with the best of local heritage. Halfway, on the old however a significant regeneration project is underway which home to a small housing estate and various light industries. Rushenden is a small outlying area of Queenborough that is The heritage can be seen at the Guildhall Museum.

important role as a base for the Royal Navy's minesweepers. World War. During the Second World War the town played an and the Dutch port of Vlissingen, and continued up until the First passenger service, which started in 1860 and by a Cross-Channel recovery of the town from this grim period was greatly helped Mayor Greet seized control of the town's oyster beds. The town was reduced to a state of starvation when the tyrannical for survival. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the a small impoverished community relying on its fishing industries Queenborough, thereafter, would remain for many generations its main purpose, was demolished by Parliament in 1650. modern borough. Unfortunately the castle, which gave the town castle and adjacent town, completed in 1368, on the site of the Queenborough owes its existence to Edward III who founded a

## QUEENBOROUGH

## EASTCHURCH, HARTY & ELMLEY

The quiet parish of Eastchurch is surrounded by enjoyable country walks with some beautiful views across the Swale and to the north Thames estuary. However it is also steeped in history. Eastchurch is the home of early aviation. 100 years ago in 1909 Eastchurch became a leading centre in this Country for the race to fly machines that were powered and capable of being controlled, not at the discretion of the wind, but at the will of the pilot of the airplane. The aerodrome used during those exhilarating and inspiring times was used in both World Wars. There's a memorial to all this opposite the peaceful 14th century church, and it was at nearby Shurland Hall (that is currently being restored) that Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn visited in 1532.

Nearby, Harty is really a separate island, and until comparatively recently the neighbourhood was known as the "Isles of Sheppey", which included the main Island and the smaller ones of Elmley and Harty. Visiting Harty one cannot but feel the remoteness of the place in fact the little St. Thomas the Apostle Church has been described as Kent's most remote church famous for its annual Harvest and Flower festival. However, if you thought there was no wilderness left in the south east, come and have a look at Elmley Marshes! The RSPB Reserve has windswept salt marshes that are inhabited by many breeding wetland birds, marsh frogs, insects, birds of prey and aquatic plants, plus much more and certainly worth a visit.

RSPB members are free but there is a small charge for non members. Parking and toilets are available. For more information call 01795 665969/01634 222480 or log on to the website: www.rspb.org.uk/reserves



Elmley Bird Reserve



# The Isle of Sheppey

## TOURIST INFORMATION FOR SHEPPEY

*Find out about tours of the Island, local events, history talks & walks as well as places to eat and visit*



**Tourism Information at:**

Blue Town Heritage centre  
69 High Street, Blue Town

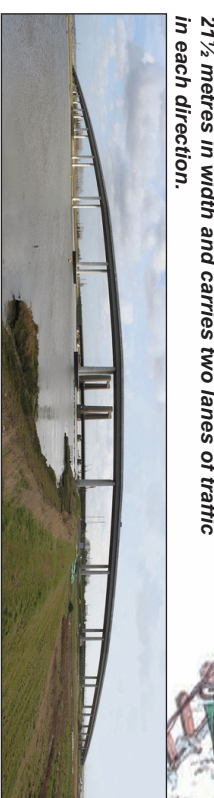


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The Sheppey Crossing is 1.27 km long, rises to a height of 34.7m above the Swale. This gives 29m clearance for shipping above high water level. It is 21½ metres in width and carries two lanes of traffic in each direction.



1. Abbey Gatehouse Museum
2. All Tide Landing Stage
3. Blue Flag Beach
4. Blue Town
5. Clock Tower, Sheerness
6. Eastchurch Church
7. Garrison Point Fort
8. Harty Ferry Inn
9. Historic Dockyard
10. Kingsferry Bridge
11. Minster Abbey
12. Minster Cliffs
13. Muswell Manor
14. Naturalist Beach
15. Queenborough
16. Queenborough Church
17. Queenborough Guildhall Museum
18. Richard Montgomery Wreck
19. RSPB Bird Reserve
20. Shurland Hall
21. Site of Early Flight
22. Site of Queenborough Castle
23. St Thomas at Harty
24. The Creek - Queenborough
25. The Grotto
26. The Sheppey Crossing

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