



Royal
Geographical
Society
with IBG

From shipping to shopping

A self guided walk from Old Portsmouth to Southsea



Explore Britain's only city on an island
Discover how the coastal position influenced the town
Find out why a naval base was established here
See how the maritime heritage remains important today

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the stories of our landscapes
discovered through walks





This booklet is to be used alongside the audio commentary for this walk

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From shipping to shopping

Discover the rebirth of historic Old Portsmouth

For many people Portsmouth on England's south coast is a stopping off point on the way to other more glamorous places but it's a fascinating place in its own right and deserves a visit.

Portsmouth is the only UK city on an island, bounded by water on all sides.

Once a low-lying boggy marsh susceptible to flooding, the vast natural harbour attracted first the Romans, then the Royal Navy which set up their headquarters here.



Ordnance Survey map of Portsmouth Point (1858)
Wikimedia Commons

This waterfront walk reveals how the city grew from humble beginnings to become one of the world's most important naval bases.



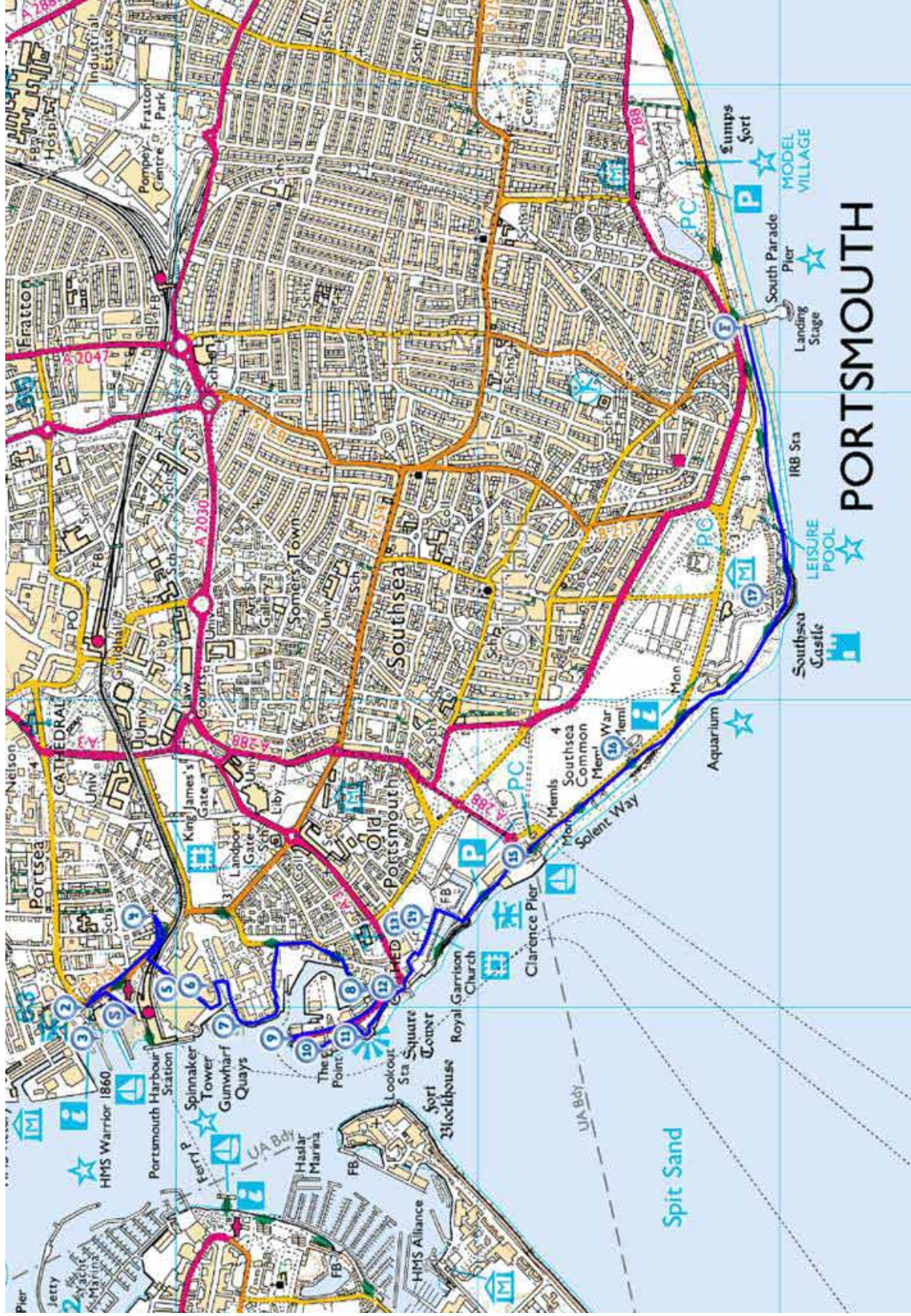
The Spinnaker Tower
Rory Walsh © RGS-IBG Discovering Britain

Find out why the dockyard, once said to be the largest industrial installation in the world, was transformed into a twenty-first century shopping centre.

Learn about the development of Portsmouth as a seaside resort in the Victorian era. See how WW2 bombing devastated the city.

Discover how a renewed respect for Portsmouth's heritage and history is reinventing its identity.

Route overview



Practical information

Location	Portsmouth, Hampshire, Southeast England
Getting there	<p>Train - The nearest railway station is Portsmouth Harbour (not to be confused with Portsmouth and Southsea station). Half hourly services run to London, Southampton and Brighton. Hourly services to Bristol and Cardiff.</p> <p>Car - Easily accessible from the A3 and M27. Many car parks including Gunwharf Quays and Portsmouth Point (charges apply).</p> <p>Bus - Served by a variety of local and long distance services. The bus station is located at The Hard next to Portsmouth Harbour railway station.</p> <p>Bicycle - National Cycle Route 2 passes near the walk route. There is a bicycle rack at Portsmouth Harbour station.</p>
Start point	Portsmouth Harbour railway station, PO1 3PA
Finish point	South Parade Pier, Southsea PO4 0SW
Onward journey	The walk is linear so you are advised to return to the start of the walk by bus. Please refer to Directions 18 for details.
Distance	4 miles
Need a shorter route?	Option for a shorter walk by stopping within view of South Parade Pier.
Level	Gentle - A flat route around the old town and waterfront.

Conditions

The route mainly follows the Millennium Promenade trail which is well surfaced.

Suitable for

Families - Plenty along the seafront to interest children. Take care crossing roads especially near the car ferry terminal and on the old walls (Stops 11 and 12).

Wheelchairs and pushchairs - A mostly flat route with diversions available to avoid steps.

Refreshments

Plenty of places to stop for drinks and food in the town and along the seafront. The Spinnaker Cafe and The Bridge Hotel both in Old Portsmouth are recommended.

Facilities

Public toilets available at the bus station, Gunwharf Quays (Stop 5), Point Battery (Stop 11), Clarence Pier (Stop 15) and D-day car park.

Baby changing facilities at Point Battery, D-day car park and Clarence Pier.

Places to visit

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is open from 10am most days of the year. Access to the site is free though charges apply for the museums and to board the ships. Attractions include **HMS Victory**, **HMS Warrior** and the **National Museum of the Royal Navy**.

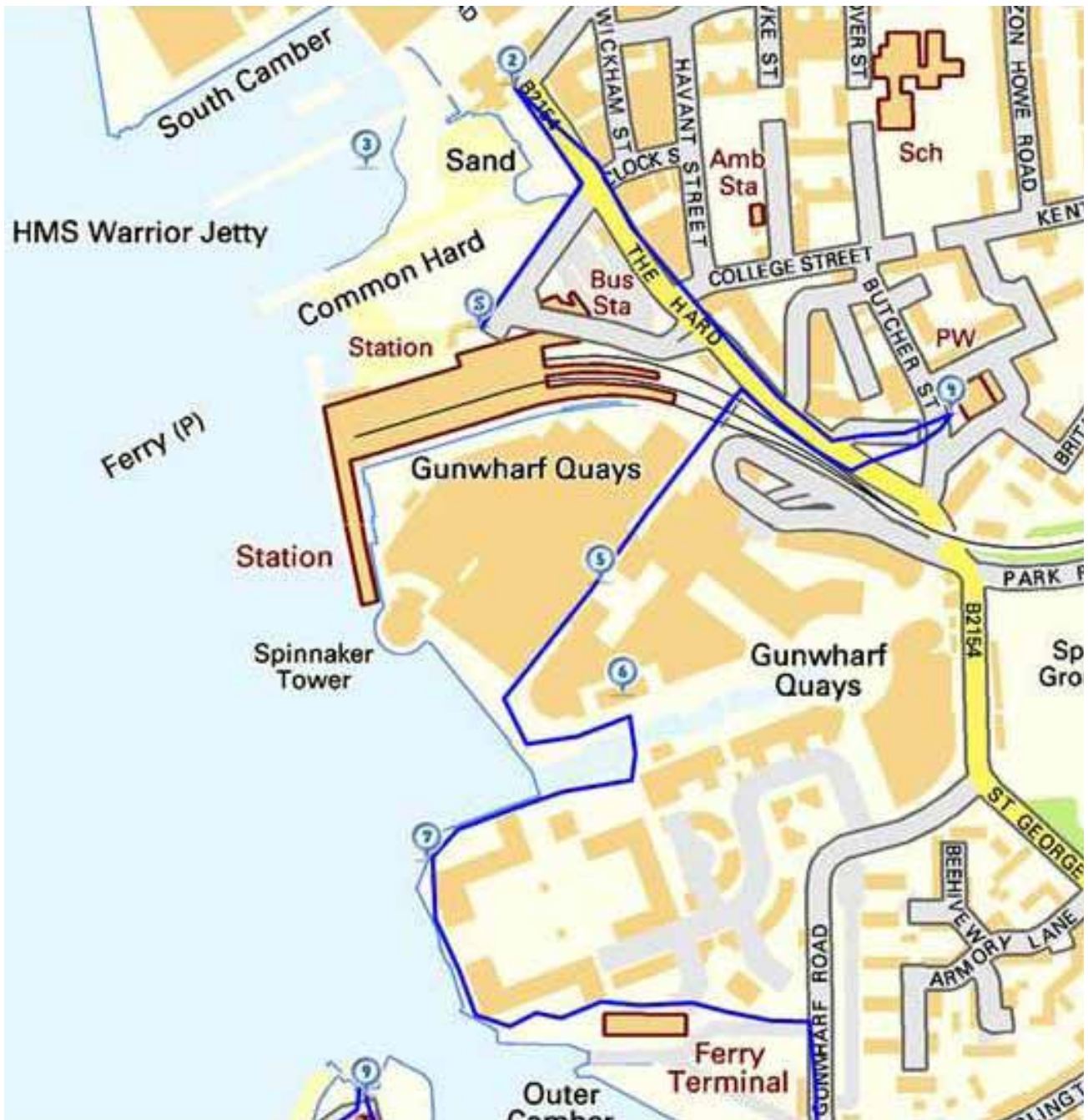
The D-Day Museum near Southsea Castle (Stop 17) is open from 10am most days of the year. Entry charges apply.

Tourist information

Portsmouth Visitor Information Service is inside the D-Day Museum, Clarence Esplanade, Southsea PO5 3NT

There is a visitor information desk inside **Portsmouth City Museum** (open Tues - Sun) on Museum Road, PO1 2LJ.

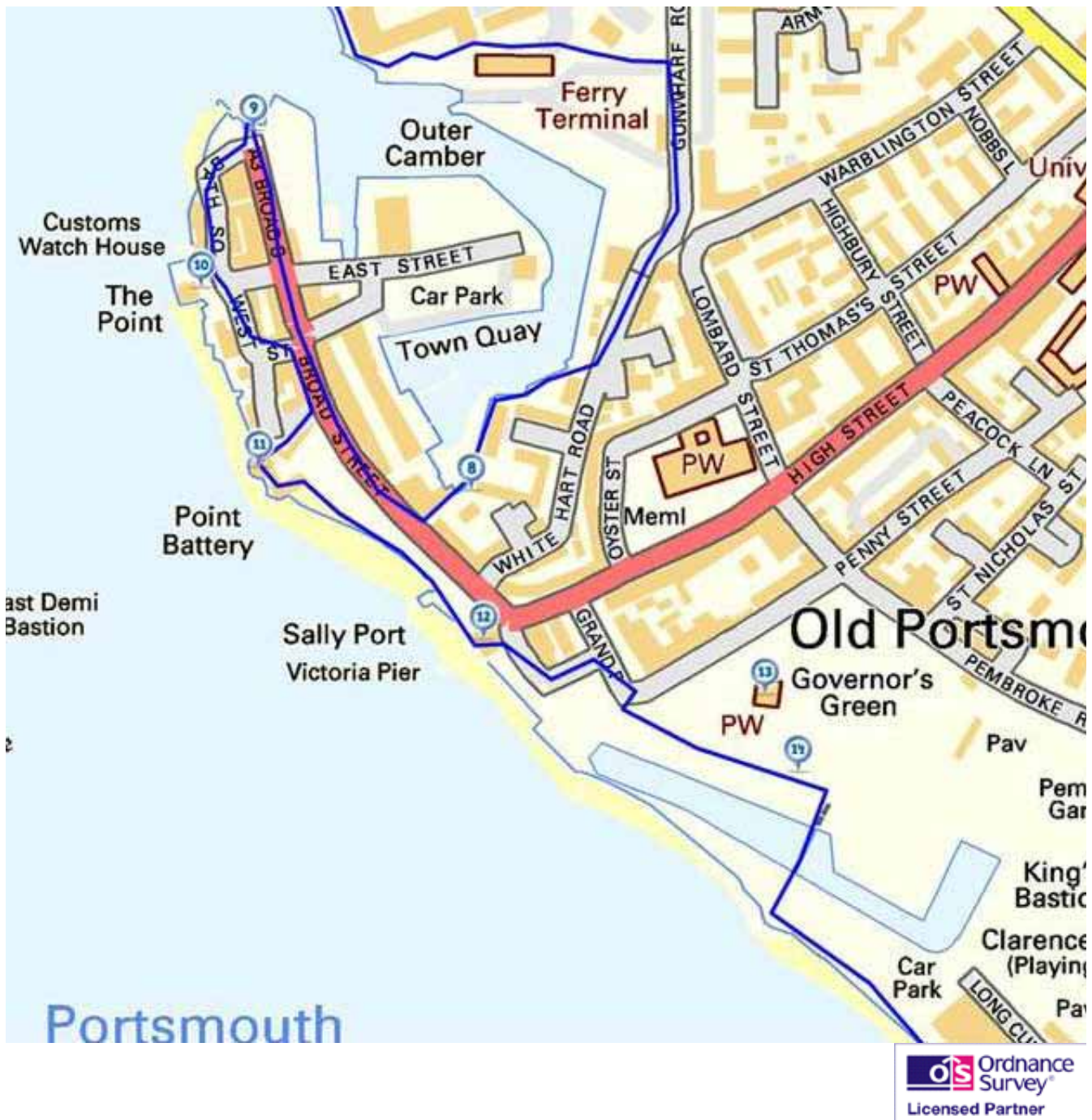
First part of route



Stopping points

1. Portsmouth Harbour railway station
2. Victory Gate, Portsmouth Dockyard
3. HMS Warrior
4. St George's Square
5. Gunwharf Quays shopping centre
6. The Old Customs House pub
7. View over Portsmouth Harbour

Second part of route



Stopping points

- 8.** The Camber
- 9.** Spice Island Inn, The Point
- 10.** Quebec House, Bath Square
- 11.** The Round Tower, Capstan Square
- 12.** The Square Tower
- 13.** Royal Garrison Church, Governor's Green
- 14.** King's Bastion

Third part of route



Stopping points

15. Clarence Pier
16. Royal Navy War Memorial, Southsea Common
17. Southsea Castle
18. South Parade Pier

Directions

Listen to each track then read the directions in the boxes below to get to the next stop.

Much of the route follows the Portsmouth Millennium Trail which is marked by a chain pattern in the pavement and large white information boards. Use the chain to help you navigate the walk route.



1. Welcome to Portsmouth

Portsmouth Harbour railway station

Directions 1a

To begin the walk make your way to Portsmouth Harbour railway station. Find the bicycle rack beside the station steps. Stop in the area between the bicycle racks and a snack bar for a good view out across the water. Listen to Track 1.

Directions 1b

From the railway station follow the road ahead alongside the wire fence. Turn left towards the ship in the water and continue up to the imposing buildings of the Historic Dockyard. Stop at the dockyard gates and listen to Track 2.

2. Natural Harbour

Victory Gate, Portsmouth Dockyard

Directions 2

When you are ready, return to the Dockyard gates and go a few steps along the promenade back towards the station. Stop by the bronze statue of a man and a young girl commemorating the Portsmouth 'mudlarks'. Look towards the boat ahead and listen to Track 3.

3. Donkey rides and deckchairs

HMS Warrior, The Hard

Directions 3

Continue ahead on the main road (The Hard). Pass the bus terminal on your right taking care when crossing the entrance and exit ways. Pass several railway arches on the right then cross the road to a post box. Continue along Ordnance Road towards the large church in St George's Square. Stop outside the church and listen to Track 4.

4. From Georgian splendour to 60s tower block

90 St George's Square

Directions 4

With the monument and boards commemorating Brunel behind you, cross back over the road. Turn right then go into the railway arch signposted Gunwharf Quays. Go through the tunnel and into the arcade of shops. Stop when you reach a plaza area on the left with tables and chairs. Listen to Track 5 here.

5. Torpedoes and trainers

Gunwharf Quays shopping centre

Directions 5

Continue through the shopping centre until you reach the waterfront. From here there is a good view across the water to Gosport and you may see boats and ferries plying the harbour waters. Turn left and follow the path round the corner until you reach The Old Customs House pub. Stop outside and listen to Track 6.

6. Shopping for history

The Old Customs house pub, canal-side

Directions 6

With the Old Customs House behind you, cross over the canal via one of the bridges. Turn right and pass the ship's figurehead towards the waterfront. With the modern apartments behind you stop here on a promontory where there's a good view of the extent of the harbour. Listen to Track 7.

7. A drowned valley

Gunwharf apartments with view over the Harbour

Directions 7

Continue on the riverside path (following the Millennium Trail chain) around the back of the new apartments. The path goes slightly downhill then through a gap in the wall to emerge at the marshalling area for cars to the Isle of Wight ferries. Follow the brick wall on the left to emerge at the main road. Turn right and walk past the ferry terminal. Take great care for traffic especially if a ferry is loading or unloading.

Follow the road that veers to the right, White Hart Road. Pass the fish market and turn right into Feltham Row. Follow the waterside walk until you reach a white clapboard house at the end of the path. Listen to Track 8.

8. Original settlement

The Camber

Directions 8

Walk to the end of the footpath and turn right along Broad Street. At the end of Broad Street look out for the metal tram tracks still visible in the cobbled road. A tram once brought passengers all the way to the tip of Old Portsmouth from where they could catch the ferry over to Gosport. Stop by the old ferry slipway next to the Spice Island Inn and listen to Track 9.

9. Old Spice

Spice Island Inn, The Point

Directions 9

From the slipway turn to the left and walk around The Point towards The Still and West Country House pub. Walk along Bath Square to the left of the pub. Stop when you reach a white clapboard house on your right – Quebec House. Listen here to Track 10.

10. Man versus sea

Quebec House, Bath Square

Directions 10a

With Quebec House behind you, walk into Bath Square then turn right into West Street. Follow the cobbled road with a red brick wall on your right. Continue on West Street until you reach the corner with Broad Street. Stop outside what was once The Seagull pub. Look across at the modern apartments slightly to the right to listen to part 2 of Track 10.

Directions 10b

Turn right into Broad Street and continue away from The Point. Turn right down Tower Alley and head for the round stone tower. Stop in the small square outside the Round Tower known as Capstan Square. Listen to Track 11

11. Defending the harbour

The Round Tower, Capstan Square

Directions 11

You now have a choice whether or not to walk along the top of the defence walls. The walls are accessible by stone steps.

To walk along the walls: follow the signs to the Round Tower and walk at high level towards the Square Tower. Listen to Track 12 as you continue.

To walk at street level: retrace your steps to Broad Street and keep the tower on your right. Head towards a group of bronze statues then go through the gap in the wall behind them. Stop on the beach to listen to Track 12.

12. Squaring up

The Square Tower

Directions 12a

If you are walking on top of the wall, stop when you reach the square shaped tower. Listen to the rest of Track 12 there.

If you are on the beach, go back through the sally port and turn right. Follow the wall up to the Square Tower and listen to the rest of Track 12.

Directions 12b

If you are on the wall: continue past the Square Tower. Take care at high tide as the water can splash over the wall. When you reach the noticeboard for the Saluting Platform turn left and descend the stone steps. Head towards the square and pass the statue of Admiral Nelson. Stop outside the ruined church on the green ahead and listen to Track 13.

From the street: keep the walls on your right and pass the Square Tower. Look up for the bust of Charles I. Bear left towards the square with Nelson's statue in it and stop outside the ruined church on the green ahead and listen to Track 13.

13. A poignant memorial

Royal Garrison Church, Governor's Green

Directions 13

From the front of the church take the path off to the right and walk up the stone steps of the grassy embankment to stand overlooking a square moat. Listen to Track 14.

To avoid the steps: keep the church on your left and follow the path alongside the bastion. Turn into the tunnel and continue onto Nelson's Bridge. Stop halfway across when you are over the water. Listen to Track 14.

14. In the footsteps of Nelson

King's Bastion

Directions 14

From the steps: continue along the path. Pass the first path to the left and take the second path on the left that bends sharply back downhill. Follow this path and go through the tunnel on to Nelson's Bridge then -

From the bridge: cross the bridge and turn right. The stone remains of the Spur Redoubt are on the left. Go left over another wooden bridge and head towards the Clarence Pier. Walk through the funfair and stop when you reach the pier building. Listen to Track 15.

15. Candy floss and slot machines

Clarence Pier

Directions 15

Continue along the Promenade looking out for various memorials on the right hand side including a large anchor dedicated to Nelson beside the hovercraft slipway. Stop across the road from the obelisk with a globe on the top and listen to Track 16.

16. Salubrious Southsea

Royal Navy War Memorial, Southsea Common

Directions 16

Continue along the Promenade with the sea on your right and head towards the black and white lighthouse of Southsea Castle. Keep the aquarium on your left and follow the coastal path. Stop on a bench with the castle behind you and look across to the Isle of Wight. Listen to Track 17.

17. Henry's Castle

Southsea Castle

Directions 17

Continue around the castle and along the Promenade. The white pier ahead is the last stop on our walk. If you are short of time you can stop on the promenade when you have a good view of the pier. Ideally stop when you reach the pier itself. Listen to Track 18.

18. The end of the pier

South Parade Pier

Directions 18

To return to the start use the crossing outside South Parade Pier and turn left. Retrace your steps for about 100 metres then turn into Clarendon Road. Look for the bus stop on the left side of the road.

From here take bus Number 1 to its terminus at The Hard next to Portsmouth Harbour railway station. Bus Number 1 runs every 10 minutes during the daytime from Monday to Saturday and every 20 minutes during the daytime on Sundays. Alternatively you can walk back to Portsmouth.

Suggested places to visit

Action Stations

www.actionstations.org

Blue Reef Aquarium

www.blureefaquarium.co.uk/portsmouth.htm

Explosion! Museum of Naval Firepower (Gosport)

<http://www.explosion.org.uk/>

Fort Nelson - Home to the Royal Armouries national collection of artillery

<http://www.royalarmouries.org/visit-us/fort-nelson>

Gunwharf Quays

www.gunwharf-quays.com

HMS Victory

www.hms-victory.com

HMS Warrior

www.hmswarrior.org

Mary Rose Museum

www.maryrose.org

National Museum of the Royal Navy

www.royalnavalmuseum.org

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

www.historicdockyard.co.uk

Portsmouth City Museums

www.portsmouthcitymuseums.co.uk

Royal Marines Museum (Southsea)

www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk

Royal Navy Submarine Museum (Gosport)

www.submarine-museum.co.uk

Southsea Castle

www.southseacastle.co.uk

Spinnaker Tower

www.spinnakertower.co.uk

Credits

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